



Dear Parents,

Following the success of our previous three SEND Newsletters, I am delighted to share with you this fourth edition.

Our SEND newsletters aim to provide parents with further information about the provision made for children with Special Educational Needs at our wonderful school. I hope you find it to be both interesting and informative.

Mrs Anne Mills
SENDCo

NEW: Assistant SENDCo

As of February half term, I am both thrilled and delighted to announce the appointment of Miss Bernice Ellis as Assistant SENDCo.

Miss Ellis will be working closely alongside myself and Mrs Carter (Autism Lead), to add extra capacity to our Shirley Heath SEND Team.

As well as providing additional SEND support and provision in school, the appointment of an Assistant SENDCo will increase the availability of parent meetings, which we are aware aren't always as readily available as we'd like them to be. Therefore, if you have any SEND related questions, Miss Ellis can be available on Tuesday mornings at 8.30am and Thursday afternoons at 2.30pm. If you would like an appointment with her, please contact the school office who will book a day/time.

Parent Workshop – Autism

Following the success of our Understanding your Child's Emotion Parent Workshop and Coffee morning last academic year, on 6th February we hosted our second event on Autism.

Rachel Dixon, Advisory Teacher from the SISS Autism team delivered a session for parents on understanding Autism, including the referral process and strategies to support children at home.

We were thrilled with how well attended the Workshop was – thank you so much for your support. 😊

A selection of comments shared in the Microsoft Forms Survey completed after the session are shown below:

"It was helpful to understand some of the differences each autistic person may experience"

'A really informative and helpful session – thank you'

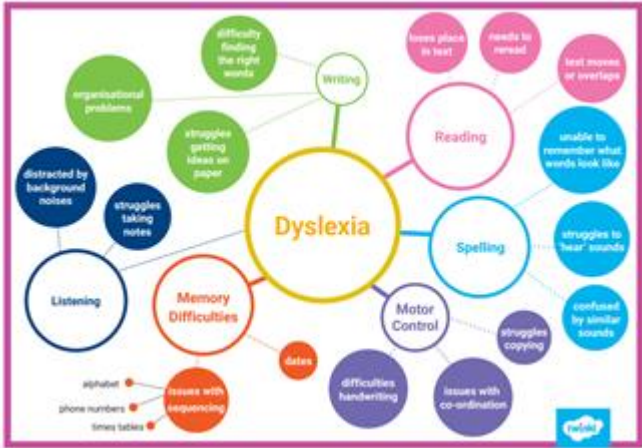
"The handouts were really useful – especially the visual timetables for use at home"

"A wonderful opportunity to talk to other parents and speak to professionals - thank you"

If you would like to know more about Autism or would like to discuss making a referral for your child, please contact Mrs Marie Carter, our Autism Lead, for further information.

Parent Workshop – Dyslexia

We will be holding another Parent Workshop in the Summer Term with a focus upon **Dyslexia** – **Wednesday 10th April 9.00-10.00am**. Further information at the end of this newsletter – all welcome 😊



Positive Feedback

I am always thrilled when professionals comment on the high quality of our SEND provision. I am proud of the work we do in school to ensure we meet the needs of the children in our care.

Last term the Local Authority completed a SEND focussed visit, in which two advisors came into school, met with children and staff, completed a learning walk and SEND audit. The outcome of this was overwhelmingly positive, with key comments as follows:

'Child centred approach and therefore reasonable adjustments in place.'

'Knowing children well and building those relationships is a key strength'

'Very Creative use of spaces especially, 'The Nest'.'

SEN Attendance Summary

School attendance data shows that the average attendance of SEND children during the Autumn term was slightly lower than that for the rest of the school as follows:

Whole School Average Autumn Term 2024	95.43%
SEND children Average Autumn Term 2024	92.89%

Our school attendance target is 97%

Research has found that poor attendance is linked to poor academic attainment across all stages (EEF Rapid Evidence Review: Attendance Interventions, March 2022).

If you are finding it difficult to get your child into school in the morning and/or need support in improving your child's attendance, please contact either myself or Mrs G Mills (Pastoral Manager) via the school office.

The Nest also offers a 'soft start' to the day for any child who needs a little extra time and adult attention in the morning – this can be accessed via the gate next to the back of 6ST, every morning from 8.20am.

AV1 Robot

We are currently using an AV1 robot as an alternative approach to learning for a child in school. It is on loan from Solihull Local Authority. Both staff and children have been wowed by the wonders of modern technology and thought we'd use this newsletter to teach you a little more about the AV1.

The AV1 robot allows a child to access their lessons through a telepresence robot called AV1. AV1 enables them to partake in the vital education and social aspects of school from home or their hospital bed during a period of prolonged absence from school.



AV1 sits in the classroom in place of the child, and the child can then join in lessons by listening, watching the teacher, asking questions, and participating in discussions. The child will be operating AV1 from a phone or tablet, wherever they might be undergoing treatment or recovering.

AV1 transmits a live stream, from the AV1 to the AV1 users' tablet. This means that no data is recorded. The live stream is end-to-end encrypted, meaning it is impossible for any external party to access the video/audio sent from the AV1. In addition, the AV1 user/their guardian are required to digitally accept terms and conditions, which state that only the AV1 user will be using the AV1.

These security features are in place to protect children who are in the same class as AV1, as well as the child who is not able to attend school.



Image above shows what the AV1 user can see on their tablet

Here's what some of our children had to say about the AV1:

'When I first saw the AV1 robot I thought it was really cool knowing robots were in our word and technology is developing even further.'

'The AV1 means you don't fall behind with your learning if you can't come into school.'

Intervention Spotlight: Read Write Inc. Fresh Start

If your child is in Year 5 or 6 and needs support with Phonics, you might find that 'Read Write Inc.

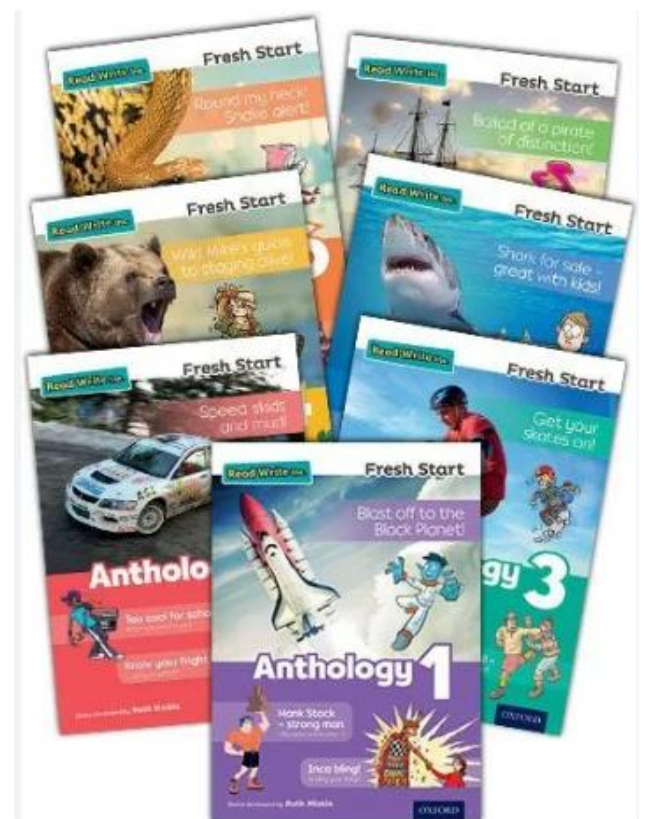
Fresh Start' is written in the provision ('Do' section) of their IEP.



Fresh Start is a systematic synthetic phonics programme for struggling readers aged 9 – 13+. It is for children who:

- are not yet reading age appropriately
- have missed schooling or are late arrivals into school
- are new to the UK education system
- are learning English as an additional language

In intervention sessions, children learn new letter-sounds and review previous sounds and words. They apply what they've been taught by reading words containing the sounds they know in lively, age-appropriate stories and non-fiction texts closely matched to their phonic knowledge.

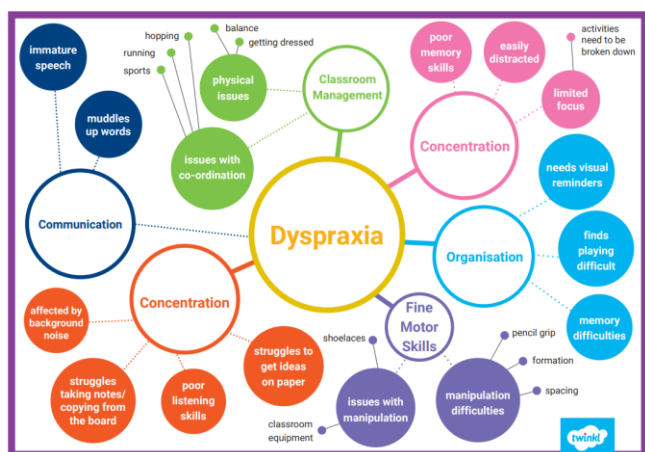


For further information about Read Write Inc, Fresh Start, click [here](#).

All about... Dyspraxia

Dyspraxia, also known as Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD) is a condition affecting physical co-ordination.

It is a neurodevelopmental disorder in which the signals from the brain do not reach the muscles accurately. This leads to problems with planning movements accurately, causing a child to perform less well than expected in daily activities for their age.

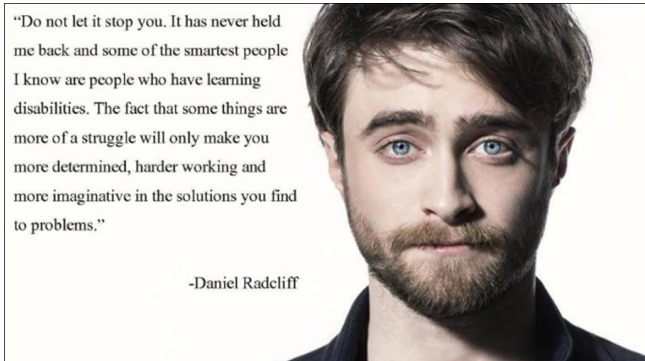


For further information about Dyspraxia, please see the NHS website [here](#).

In school, we use a variety of resources and strategies to support children with Dyspraxia, or similar needs. Some examples are as follows:

- Specialist equipment e.g. ergonomic pens/pencils, pencil grips, writing slopes, ridged rulers
- Allowing extra time to complete tasks
- Providing alternatives to writing e.g. typing
- Additional support / demonstration in lessons such as PE
- Visual resources and reminders e.g. checklists, mind maps, task boards

Actor, Daniel Radcliff, most famous for his role as Harry Potter, has talked openly to the media about his diagnosis of Dyspraxia.



Dyspraxia would usually be diagnosed via a healthcare professional such as a paediatrician or paediatric occupational therapist. If you are concerned your child may have dyspraxia, speak to your GP and/or Mrs A Mills (SENDCo).

Inclusion – P.E., School Sport and Physical Activity

As the cold nights draw in, our Shirley Heath sportspeople continue to brave the weather, donning the red and black of Shirley Heath. Similar to last year, as a school, School Sport for children with SEND is at the forefront of our planning. Already this year, several children with SEND have already represented Team Shirley Heath at the Panathlon Bowling at Acocks Green bowl - only being beaten by a secondary school - well done. all!

In Autumn 1, Charlie Fogarty MBE, an inspirational speaker (who also plays football for the Northern Ireland MS Team) came into school to share his story. His story inspired all of our children, with our school value of perseverance being shown in abundance.



You can read more about Charlie's story on his website: <https://www.charlifogarty.co.uk/>

Finally, we would love to hear from parents about future sports events and provision. We value all of your comments; if you have any comments, please complete the following form.

<https://forms.office.com/e/NotYsXDEbF>

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Mr Dowson (P.E. Subject Leader)



Understanding Dyslexia Parent Workshop and Coffee Morning



Wednesday 10th April 2024

9.00-10.00

Julie Showell, Specialist Teacher from SENTAA will be leading a session for parents and carers on Dyslexia. This will include an overview of the underlying features of Dyslexia, diagnostic pathways and strategies to support - all interested parents and carers are welcome.

Following the session, which will last approximately 30 minutes, refreshments will be served and Julie and Mrs A Mills (SENDCo) will be available for parents to ask questions and/or have individual discussions. Some of the school's Dyslexia books, intervention materials and other appropriate resources, will be available for parents to view and borrow.

Parent are more than welcome to turn up on the day, but if you are able to confirm your attendance by completing the following survey it will help us with planning (and making sure we have enough biscuits)



Survey link:

<https://forms.office.com/e/rscrGrJGxz>