

DYSLEXIA POLICY (2018)

Report by Service Director, Children and Young People

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

2 October 2018

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 **This report seeks approval for a new Dyslexia Policy.**
- 1.2 The identification of literacy difficulties including dyslexia is an area of concern for staff, pupils and parents. Parents have raised concerns regarding the 'diagnosis or labelling' of dyslexia. This policy provides a very clear and robust framework based on national guidance and advice and offers support for schools and parents in this difficult area.
- 1.3 The purpose of this guidance is to set out Policy in this area and to ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and roles to support children and young people who have, or may have, dyslexia. This involves the identification of dyslexia in a timely fashion and the provision of timely effective adaptations and interventions (including technological solutions).
- 1.4 It is important that all children and young people experience consistently high standards of practice and support. This Policy will support this to be achieved.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **It is recommended that the Executive Committee agree to the adoption of the Dyslexia Policy (2018).**

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In a Headteacher survey (carried out in June 2017), well over 95% indicated they would welcome training and support for staff in dyslexia. This is an area which has an active public profile. There is no statutory definition of dyslexia and approaches and recommendations vary.
- 3.2 A working group was formed of classroom practitioners, support for learning teachers and Educational Psychologists to construct the Policy and the operational guidance to be used by schools. This group consulted widely across all schools and stakeholders.
- 3.3 Staff in schools have identified targeted professional learning and support around identification of dyslexia as an area of priority. Parent Council Chairpersons have raised the early identification of dyslexia and our schools' responses to the diagnosis as an issue across both primary and secondary schools.
- 3.4 Literacy skills are fundamental in today's society. For many years it has been recognised that some young people have particular difficulties with learning to read, write and spell. In the past, such difficulties have been variously described as specific difficulties, specific learning difficulties, or dyslexia.

4 DYSLEXIA POLICY

- 4.1 Dyslexia can have a profound impact on children's feelings and confidence. It is therefore crucial to ensure that all children and young people in schools in the Scottish Borders who have dyslexia are identified at the right time and provided with appropriate support to ensure that they do not lose confidence in their ability to succeed.
- 4.2 All teachers have a role in supporting pupils who have or who may have dyslexia. What is required is an integrated approach which provides understanding and support to all pupils as and when they need it. All teachers therefore need to have an appropriate awareness of dyslexia.
- 4.3 This Policy (attached at Appendix 1) sets out the expectations for all staff, as well as teachers, with relevant experience, skills and knowledge, who will have a more specialist role. Where appropriate, advice and additional support can be sought from the school educational psychologist and from a range of allied health professionals. It is important to emphasise that such teachers may appropriately co-ordinate the assessment and identification of dyslexia.
- 4.4 There has been a significant amount of consultation on this Policy over a period of time, resulting in this revised document. The Policy is aligned with research evidence and national policy in this area. Moreover, the Policy is founded on the national definition of dyslexia.
- 4.5 This Policy is supported within the wider Inclusion Strategy and Policy, which was presented to the Executive Committee on 19 June 2018 and will be presented for final approval following further consultation.

- 4.6 This Policy is also supported by a comprehensive set of operational guidelines, which will support schools to identify relevant strategies and approaches to enhance the educational experiences of our young children. The Council's approach will ensure a consistent experience for all children and young people living in the Scottish Borders.

5 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial

There are no costs attached to any of the recommendations contained in this report.

5.2 Risk and Mitigations

- (a) The Policy has been long awaited by a number of stakeholder groups and will be of interest to these groups. However, the Policy is aligned with research evidence and national policy in this area. Moreover, the Policy is founded on the national definition of dyslexia.
- (b) The risks of not having consistent policy in this area outweigh the risks of adopting this Policy.
- (c) The biggest risks are reputational, arising from a hesitancy on part of staff to identify dyslexia in a timely fashion. This adoption of a formal Policy position in this area provides support to staff and will reduce the risks in this area.

5.3 Equalities

There are no adverse equality implications; rather the adoption of this Policy will actively support the equalities agenda.

5.4 Acting Sustainably

There are no significant impacts on the economy, community or environment arising from the proposals contained in this report.

5.5 Carbon Management

There are no significant effects on carbon emissions arising from the proposals contained in this report.

5.6 Rural Proofing

This report does not relate to new or amended policy or strategy and as a result rural proofing is not an applicable consideration

5.7 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

There are no changes to be made to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation as a result of the proposals contained in this report.

6 CONSULTATION

6.1 The Chief Financial Officer, the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Service Director HR and the Clerk to the Council have been consulted and their comments have been incorporated into the final report.

Approved by

Donna Manson

Service Director, Children & Young People Signature

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Appendices: Appendix 1: Policy and Procedures: Children & Young People with Literacy Difficulties Including Dyslexia

Background Papers:

Previous Minute Reference: Executive, 19 June 2018

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Contact us at Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose TD6 0SA.