

## **Dyslexia**

### **Q. What is dyslexia?**

**A.** Dyslexia is manifested in a continuum of specific learning disabilities related to the acquisition of basic skills in reading, spelling and/or writing, such difficulties being unexpected in relation to an individual's other abilities. Dyslexia can be described at the neurological, cognitive and behavioural levels.

### **Q. What are some characteristics of dyslexia?**

- Delays in acquiring language and speech.
- Difficulties in phonological processing. This could include confusion with letters and words that are alike (such as b/d and p/q), mixing up sounds of words, inability to match sounds with their letters.
- Inefficient information processing.
- Difficulty with spelling and writing.
- Shortcomings in the understanding and/or remembering of common sequences, such as days of the week and tables.
- Confusion with directions, such as left and right.
- Poor pencil grip, awkward handwriting and difficulty copying from a book or the blackboard.
- While some pupils with major problems in one area (e.g., reading, spelling and writing) may cope well in other areas (e.g., numeracy), overall attainment levels of pupils with a specific learning difficulty are generally below average.

### **Q. What can be done to help someone with dyslexia?**

**A.** First and foremost, students with dyslexia need to be recognised and understood by teachers and parents if they are to succeed in school. Because of their difficulty, a programme tailored specifically to their needs should be drawn up by the class teacher in consultation with the learning support teacher. Special classes exist in some national schools for students with specific learning disabilities. Furthermore, there are four designated schools for students with specific learning disabilities nationwide. The Dyslexia Association of Ireland (DAI) offers out-of-school workshops for students with dyslexia in 28 locations around the country and several branches

also run summer schools. For more information, see the DAI website [www.dyslexia.ie](http://www.dyslexia.ie) website.

### **Related Links**

[Dyslexia Association of Ireland www.dyslexia.ie](http://www.dyslexia.ie)

[British Dyslexia Association www.bdadyslexia.org.uk](http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk)

[LD Online \(US\) www.ldonline.org](http://www.ldonline.org)

[Report on the Task Force on Dyslexia \(PDF – 528 KB\)  
www.education.ie/servlet/blobServlet/sped\\_dyslexia.pdf](http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobServlet/sped_dyslexia.pdf)