Handout 3

Identification

Dyslexic learners are likely to have national curriculum assessment profiles that show strengths in some subjects, alongside weaknesses in reading, writing and often in number and the number system, and calculation.

They may show particular difficulties with class or group curriculum targets involving spelling, sequencing skills or rote recall. Examples might be curricular targets in class such as:

- understand how to use alphabetically ordered texts to retrieve information
- order three-digit numbers in ascending/descending order, or
- use known facts and place value to consolidate mental division.

Things to look out for in day-to-day assessment in class include, for example:

- response to questions and oral discussion that shows greater understanding than is evident in written work
- evidence that the pupil is struggling to hold facts in their mind when they work on a multi-step problem
- response to questions in word-level work that show difficulty in analysing and synthesising the sounds in spoken words, or
- evidence of difficulty in remembering instructions and organising themselves for learning.

Pupils’ written work may show letter reversals, spelling a word in several different ways in one piece of writing, unusual spellings that bear little relationship to the sounds in the word or are heavily phonetic.

Poor phonological awareness (difficulty in identifying the separate sounds that make up spoken words) is a key feature of dyslexia and close observation of pupils’ responses to the teaching of phonics is useful in identifying dyslexia.

Checklists can be useful in drawing together teachers’ observations and other information about the pupil, eg. information from parents/carers.