



Professional Learning Activity.

**Dyslexia and Inclusive Practice:
From Understanding to Action
Mission Superheroes**



Professional Learning Activity

Dyslexia and Inclusive Practice: From Understanding to Action

Mission Superheroes

This Professional Learning Activity sits within Scotland's vision for inclusive education. This vision is encapsulated in the following quotation.

" Inclusive education in Scotland starts from the belief that education is a human right and the foundation for a more just society. An inclusive approach which recognises diversity and holds the ambition that all children and young people are enabled to achieve to their fullest potential is the cornerstone to achieve equity and excellence in education for all of our children and young people".

Presumption to provide education in a mainstream setting. The Scottish Government 2019



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Acknowledgments

Appendix 1

Welcome

Welcome to this free self-directed professional learning resource and activity which has been developed to support educators working with and supporting dyslexic children and young people. The PLA explores the current Scottish education context, highlights the strengths and challenges faced by dyslexic children and young people and provides examples of effective strategies to support all learners in an inclusive setting.

Learning Outcomes

This professional learning resource aims to:

- Show how this professional learning is contextualised within Scotland's educational and legislative landscape
- Increase familiarity with the principles and strategies of Mission Dyslexia and Mission Superheroes and show how these align with key educational policies in Scotland.
- Share the positive outcomes of both the Sean Connery Foundation Dyslexia Initiative (2022-2025) and the Mission Dyslexia and Mission Superheroes workshops through two case studies and comments from the pupils who participated in these case studies.
- Support the mindset shift from focussing on the challenges of dyslexia to considering and encouraging the personal strengths and skills each dyslexic child or young person has.
- Support an awareness of the tools and approaches that can help dyslexic children and young people to thrive in school and outside school;
- Increase educator confidence levels in supporting children and young people through the use of these tools and approaches.

Self-directed reflective learning

Some reflective activities have been included for your enrichment and designed to help you build a picture and understanding of your unique context. They are not assessed.

Downloadable files and further reading within this resource.



Download Icon

The Download icon lets you know when you must download the file to engage in the activities.

Before You Begin Questionnaire

Before you begin, complete this [questionnaire](#) which is designed to help you reflect on your current knowledge and confidence in relation to:

- Inclusive practice and the Scottish context.
- Dyslexia
- The impact dyslexia can have on the wellbeing of dyslexic children and young people
- What support may be available.

Completing the same questionnaire at the end of the module, will give you an idea of how much you have learned by participating in the PLA content. Once you have completed the professional learning resource there is a link to Dyslexia Scotland's Myth Busting Quiz.

Dyslexia and Inclusive Practice professional learning modules

This resource provides complementary professional learning to the three incremental Dyslexia and Inclusive Practice professional learning modules developed by Dyslexia Scotland and Education Scotland that are available on the Open University Open Learn Create platform.

[OLCreate: Dyslexia Scotland | OLCreate](#)

1. Introduction to Dyslexia and Inclusive Practice
2. Supporting Dyslexia, Inclusive Practice and Literacy
3. Dyslexia: Identification and Support.

Professional Learning Resources/Activities

- Assessing, Supporting and Planning for Literacy Difficulties and Dyslexia
- Dyslexia and Inclusive Practice: From Understanding to Action

This professional learning activity is one of two that builds on the work of the Sean Connery Foundation Dyslexia Initiative which took place in the City of Edinburgh and the work of Mission Dyslexia and Mission Superheroes. Further information on these initiatives can be accessed in the links below: They have been developed specifically to share practice and approaches which have been successfully used in support of children and young people.

The development of the two professional learning resources has been funded by a grant from HSBC UK Bank.

[Sir Sean Connery's legacy for dyslexia | Dyslexia Scotland - Dyslexia Scotland](#)

<https://addressingdyslexia.org/supporting-learners-and-families/support/mission-superheroes/>

Target audience and terminology

This professional learning resource has been developed to provide a professional learning opportunity primarily for educators. The term '**educators**' is used throughout. **Educators** refer to teachers, pupil support staff (often called Pupil Support Assistants), and community learning and development colleagues e.g. youth workers.

The audience may, however, include parents and carers who are interested and involved in the support of dyslexic children and young people.

The PLA refers to '**dyslexic children and young people**' as the preferred term throughout.

Part One. Introduction

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In this section you will explore:

- The Sean Connery Foundation Dyslexia Initiative
- Mission Dyslexia and Mission Superheroes programme
- How the principles and strategies of Mission Dyslexia and Mission Superheroes are consistent with key educational and legislative policies such as inclusive practice and pupil wellbeing, in Scotland.

1.1 The Sean Connery Foundation Dyslexia Initiative (SCFDI)

The primary intention of The Sean Connery Foundation Dyslexia Initiative (launched in 2022) was to improve literacy outcomes for children with literacy-related difficulties/dyslexia. Through the partnership between the City of Edinburgh Council, Dyslexia Scotland and the Sean Connery Foundation, the programme of intervention was developed; it was very positively evaluated at the end of the three years.

Inherent in this goal was the boosting of confidence and realising of potential for those young people who were supported during this initiative. Inspired by Sean Connery's recognition of the powerful and transformational force of literacy in a person's life, the initiative aimed to reduce the stigma associated with dyslexia and help students improve their literacy skills.

1.2 Mission Dyslexia and Mission Superheroes

The Mission Dyslexia and Mission Superheroes programmes were developed by Paul and Julie McNeill and illustrator Rossie Stone. The pilot programme for Mission Superheroes was co-created with members of the Addressing Dyslexia Toolkit and their local authorities. The resources developed for the pilot included lesson plans, workshop support notes and information and are available on the Addressing Dyslexia Toolkit.

The inspiration for Mission Dyslexia and Mission Superheroes came from negative lived experience of dyslexia and the drive and aspiration to support children and young people in developing a resilient and creative mindset despite the challenges of dyslexia.

The lived experiences of Dyslexia Scotland Ambassadors Paul McNeill and Rossie Stone similarly reflect their recognition of the power of literacy and the frustration that dyslexic children and young people can experience. Being mindful that the associated characteristics of dyslexia are broader than only literacy, the programmes raise awareness of the role of strengths in building a positive mindset towards oneself as a dyslexic learner. You can download some practical resources in Part Two of this module.



1.4 Section One Key Points Summary

1. This professional learning activity is part of a series of Dyslexia and Inclusive Practice online modules.
2. It provides a professional learning opportunity for educators involved in the support and care of dyslexic children and young people. It builds on the strength-based approach of the Mission Dyslexia and Mission Superheroes workshops.
3. It aims to support educators in building a child or young person's self-confidence and wellbeing by sharing resources and strategies from the Mission Dyslexia and Mission Superheroes workshops. These are for practical implementation in classrooms.

4. In the spirit of the Mission Dyslexia and Mission Superheroes workshops, this PLA deliberately supports the mindset shift from dyslexic challenges to strengths of dyslexic learners.



1.3 Reflective activity 1

Use your Reflective log to note your responses

1. What do you, as an educator, hope to gain from this resource and activity?
2. Write down two specific goals that apply to your unique situation.

Part Two. Understanding the Scottish Context

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In this section you will explore:

- The Scottish education policy and legislation framework
- Inclusive education
- National policy and drivers
 - Realising the Ambition: Being Me
 - Curriculum for Excellence (Policy framework)
 - Curriculum for Excellence and Curriculum Improvement Cycle
 - The Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) Approach (Policy).
- The 2025 refreshed Scottish working definition
- 'Towards a dyslexia-friendly Scotland?'

2.1 The Scottish education policy and legislation framework

Scotland's education system is rights based, inclusive, and designed to make sure that every child and young person gains as much as possible from the opportunities that their education can provide. Our education system has been developed to ensure that the provision of support for a child or young person is based on what they need and is not dependent upon them receiving a formal label, medical diagnosis or identification of need such as autism, dyslexia, mental health or a physical disability.

The Scottish vision for inclusive education and the legislative framework applies to eligible children from the age of two attending an early learning setting and children and young people throughout their school education at a school.

In practice this means that every child or young person has the right to access the same opportunities and every aspect of the curriculum that is offered to their peers and be supported to be their authentic self in their learning environment.

Children's rights and entitlements are fundamental to Scotland's approaches to inclusive education. These are supported by a number of areas which include:

- a rights-based, child centred legislative and policy framework
- policy drivers including the National Improvement Framework (NIF) and the Getting It Right For Every Child approach (often referred to as GIRFEC)
- Curriculum for Excellence

Figure 1. Provides an extensive overview of the Scottish legislative and policy framework. There is an accessible word file of the image available to in Appendix 1.

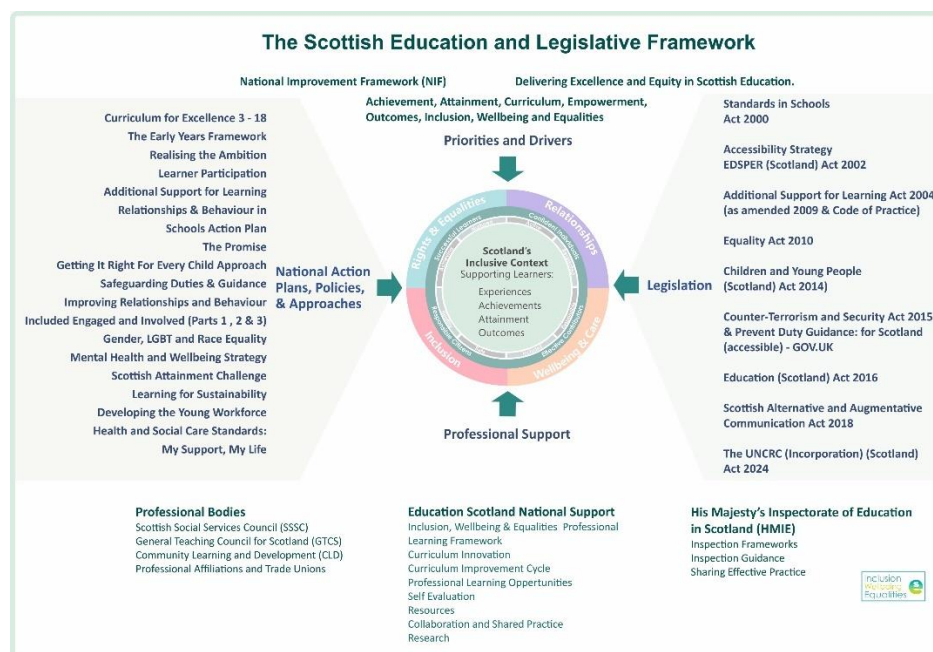


Figure 1. The Scottish legislative and policy framework.

2.2 Inclusive education

The Scottish vision for inclusive education applies to:

- eligible children from age 2 who attend an early learning setting
- children and young people throughout their education at school

This means that every child or young person has the right to access:

- the same opportunities
- every aspect of the curriculum
- support to be their authentic self in their learning environment

There are several important groundbreaking legislative Acts that underpin our rights based Scottish Education. The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 (as amended) is one of them.

The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 (as amended)

The Act imposes various duties on education authorities and responsible bodies. It provides the legal framework for identifying and addressing the additional support needs of children and young people through the Staged Level of Intervention Model who face a barrier, or barriers, to learning.

Staged intervention is used as a means of identification, assessment, planning, recording and review to meet the learning needs of children and young people.

Staged intervention:

- Provides a solution-focused flexible approach to meeting needs at the earliest opportunity and with the least intrusive level of intervention.
- Involves the child, parents/carers, school staff and, at some levels, other professionals. All working in partnership to get it right for every child.

Universal Support

The entitlement to universal support for all children and young people is provided from within the existing early learning and school settings. The vast majority of children and young people in Scotland are supported through Universal support.

Targeted support

Usually, but not exclusively, co-ordinated and provided by specialist staff/partners and includes multi-agency support.

Across Scotland's 32 local authorities there is variation in the number of support levels and names of support plans. The Co-ordinated Support Plan (CSP) is the **only** educational statutory plan and sits within the Targeted level of support.

A child or young person who meets the criteria for a CSP:

- Needs support due to complex or multiple factors that negatively and significantly affect their education
- Will, or are likely to, need long term support (for more than a year),
- Need significant additional multi agency support, for example, this can include social work and or the NHS.

Further information on the legislative framework and planning for children and young people who require additional support can be found in the Informed level of the Inclusion section of the Education Scotland Inclusion, Wellbeing and Equalities Professional Learning Framework.

[Inclusion, wellbeing and equalities framework | Leading professional learning | Professional Learning | Education Scotland](#)

2.3 National policy and drivers

Whilst the following are not legislated, they provide frameworks and national guidance to ensure consistency and a structure to Scottish Education. Many contain agreed entitlements, good practice models and an expectation of implementation.

2.3.1 Realising the Ambition: Being Me

<https://education.gov.scot/resources/realising-the-ambition/>

This early years national practice guidance for Scotland presents key information about the characteristics of child development based on research and evidence. 'Realising the Ambition: Being Me' increases expectations of high quality but still provides the necessary support for all who work in the early years sector and beyond. This includes primary and secondary educators. Realising the Ambition is a key component of the Curriculum improvement Cycle.

[realisingtheambition.pdf](#)

2.3.2 Scotland Curriculum: Curriculum for Excellence (Policy framework)

curriculum for excellence



Scotland has a single curriculum designed to be inclusive for all children and young people and therefore Inclusion wellbeing, equality and equity underpin [Curriculum for Excellence](#). While Curriculum for Excellence is a major policy driver in Scottish education, it is not a statutory provision.

As part of their learner journey, all children and young people in Scotland are entitled to experience a coherent curriculum from 3 to 18, in order that they have opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they need to adapt, think critically and flourish in today's world.

2.3.3 Curriculum for Excellence and Curriculum Improvement Cycle

Evidence of Scotland's commitment to providing a meaningful learner-centred experience is the Curriculum Improvement Cycle (CIC). This is a wide-ranging review and refresh of Scotland's national curriculum which is taking place over a ten-year cycle. It is a response to a specific recommendation made in the 2021 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Review of Scottish Education

for a structured and systematic review of the curriculum. The CIC review does not intend to replace the Curriculum for Excellence framework but to make sure it remains fit for purpose by being “relevant, forward-looking and improves learner outcomes” through the new lens of the ‘Know Do and Understand’ (KDU) curriculum model.

Further information and updates on the CIC can be found on the links below:

[Curriculum Improvement Cycle – Education Scotland](#)

[Curriculum for Excellence | Education Scotland](#)

[Curriculum for Excellence 2020-2021 - OECD review: initial evidence pack - gov.scot](#)

This is good news for all learners, but particularly for dyslexic children and young people, as it should lead to whole-school improvements and ensure that the totality of the curriculum is inclusive. In turn, this should create more supportive and accessible learning environments, a key feature of the approach recommended in the Addressing Dyslexia Toolkit.

2.3.4 The Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) Approach, (Policy)



[Getting It Right For Every Child](#) (GIRFEC) is the national approach to improving the wellbeing of children and young people. Through policy and the delivery of services at both national and local level, the GIRFEC approach:

- puts the best interests of the child at the heart of decision making
- takes a holistic approach to the wellbeing of a child
- works with children, young people and their families on ways to improve wellbeing
- advocates preventative work and early intervention to support children, young people and their families
- believes professionals must work together in the best interests of the child

This policy approach is about enhancing the wellbeing of all children and young people as well as building a flexible scaffold of support: where it is needed, for as long as it is needed through a team around the child and **non-statutory** educational planning. The GIRFEC approach is used when there is concerns about a child or young person's wellbeing. It guides planning and intervention.

The Sean Connery Foundation Dyslexia Initiative and Mission Dyslexia and Mission Superheroes workshop initiatives are primarily focussed on safeguarding and building the wellbeing of dyslexic children and young people. This is consistent with the aims of the ASfL Act and the national GIRFEC approach which puts the child or young person at the centre of any assessment, planning and support.

- There is an interconnection with the legislative ASfL Act and the GIRFEC policy when identifying need – 'Wellbeing' can be a factor that gives rise to requiring additional support.
- A 'GIRFEC Plan' or 'Child's Plan' is **not** a statutory plan for education, it is only a statutory plan for social work. Neither replace the only statutory education plan which is called a Co-ordinated Support Plan (CSP).

Using GIRFEC

In line with the aims of the GIRFEC approach, it can be helpful for educators working to support children and young people to ask themselves structured questions that enable consistency in decision-making. In this way adults involved in the young person's learning journey can form a more informed view of what support is needed. This also gives trusted adults an opportunity to build a greater understanding of their own unique context and to request and tailor support accordingly.

Where a wellbeing need has been identified, practitioners working with the child or young person or a family member should ask themselves the **five GIRFEC questions**:

- **What is getting in the way of this child or young person's wellbeing?**
- **Do I have all the information I need to help this child or young person?**
- **What can I do now that is needed and appropriate to help this child or young person?**
- **What can my agency or organisation do now to help this child or young person?**
- **What additional help, if any, may be needed from others?**

Central to the GIRFEC practice model there are eight wellbeing indicators that can deepen our understanding of the wellbeing of our dyslexic child or young person.

- Safe
- Healthy
- Achieving
- Nurtured
- Active
- Respected
- Responsible
- Included

These wellbeing indicators help everyone working with a child or young person to be consistent in measuring their quality of their life. Educators can be guided in their conversations about a child/young person's needs by using these indicators so that they can access the right support or advice. It is important for educators to remember that parents and carers usually know their dyslexic child or young person better than anyone else and are therefore well-positioned to advocate for and with them and to negotiate appropriate support.

Further information on the GIRFEC approach is available on the Scottish Government website. [Practice Statement – The child's plan within Getting it right for every child \(GIRFEC\) - Getting it right for every child \(GIRFEC\): child's plan - practice statement - gov.scot](#)



2.4 Reflective Activity 2

Use your Reflective log to note your responses.

1. Apply the 5 questions from the GIRFEC practice model to your own unique context and the child or young person you are supporting. Ask yourself the 5 questions. Your answers will help guide the support your child/young person may need.
 - What is getting in the way of this child or young person's wellbeing?
 - Do I have all the information I need to help this child or young person?
 - What can I do now that is needed and appropriate to help this child or young person?
 - What can my agency or organisation do now to help this child or young person?
 - What additional help, if any, may be needed from others?
2. Plot the 8 wellbeing indicators on the self-evaluation wheel in your reflective log as they apply to your child/young person in your particular context.

Using the wheel:

- Consider each point on the wheel in turn.
- Think about the wellbeing indicators and where you might place your child/young person on the wheel:

0 indicates not confident/lots of areas to develop or work on;

10 indicates very confident/accomplished in this area.

Think about '**why**' you place your child / young person on that point.

Looking at areas you have identified, what should/could be your next steps to help take support forward?

- What do you notice about the completed wheel?
- Which areas stand out as strengths?
- Which areas need support?

2.5 Scotland's working definition of dyslexia

Scotland has had its own working definition of dyslexia since 2009. Most local authorities have adopted this definition. The definition has been developed by the Scottish Government, Dyslexia Scotland, the Cross-Party Group on Dyslexia in the Scottish Parliament and a wide range of stakeholders. This is one of many definitions available and is recommended as helpful guidance by Education Scotland.

The aim of the Scottish working definition has always been to provide a description of the range of indicators and characteristics of dyslexia as helpful guidance for educational practitioners, children, parents/carers and others.

The advice and guidance for the identification, assessment and support of dyslexia within the online Addressing Dyslexia Toolkit is linked directly to the Scottish working definition of dyslexia.

The Scottish working definition of dyslexia

Dyslexia can be described as a continuum of difficulties in learning to read, write and/or spell, which persist despite the provision of appropriate learning opportunities. These difficulties often do not reflect an individual's cognitive abilities and may not be typical of performance in other areas.

The impact of dyslexia as a barrier to learning varies in degree according to the learning, teaching and working environment, as there are often associated difficulties such as:

- auditory and visual processing of language-based information
- phonological processing – awareness, processing speed and/or memory
- oral language skills
- reading fluency
- short-term and working memory
- sequencing and directionality
- number skills
- organisational ability
- motor skills and co-ordination may also be affected

Dyslexia exists in all cultures and across the range of abilities and socio-economic backgrounds.

It is hereditary, life-long and neurodevelopmental and it can impact on wellbeing.

Unidentified and/or unsupported dyslexia can have an impact on achievement and may lead to lower self-esteem and higher stress.

Learners with dyslexia will benefit from early identification, inclusive ethos, approaches and environments, appropriate intervention and support.

Research has confirmed that dyslexia impacts not only reading and writing but all aspects of an individual's life. This is why, for example, dyslexic individuals may often lose things, find it hard to organise themselves or forget to do things when given an oral list of instructions.

<https://dyslexiascotland.org.uk/what-is-dyslexia/>

To ensure the Scottish working definition continues to be robust and reflects current research and approaches, consideration has been given to the 2024 Delphi Dyslexia Definition and some minor changes made to the Scottish definition as a result.

Although these two definitions have been developed around different contexts and systems and there are some differences in terminology, they are very similar in that they both focus on literacy difficulties. They both also include the wider range of associated characteristics, such as the impact of dyslexia on processing and limits to working memory, and both emphasise holistic approaches to identification.

The Scottish definition now includes references to the support of dyslexic people in post-school settings.

2.6. Towards a dyslexia-friendly Scotland?

Between 2023 and 2024, working in partnership with Glasgow University, Dyslexia Scotland undertook Scotland's biggest-ever survey of its dyslexic adult population. Following analysis of the research, the report 'Towards a dyslexia-friendly Scotland?' was published and launched at a Scottish Parliament event.

The survey of over 1400 adults revealed that, despite many individual stories of success and resilience, dyslexia is still often misunderstood in our wider Scottish society and that sometimes people are overlooked or discriminated against as a result. The report points out that the resultant "lack of tailored support can lead to

long-term negative outcomes, including higher rates of mental health issues, economic disadvantage and social exclusion” (page 14) - hence Dyslexia Scotland’s call for action in working towards a more inclusive, accessible “dyslexia-friendly Scotland”.

The report also highlighted that there are positive signs of improvement such as the falling age range for identification, an outcome which has been supported by the range of nationally available professional learning opportunities.

Further information and the report can be downloaded from the Dyslexia Scotland website.

[Towards a dyslexia-friendly Scotland? | Dyslexia Scotland - Dyslexia Scotland](#)

You can find more information on dyslexia and the identification process on the Dyslexia Scotland webpage: [Am I Dyslexic?](#)

You may also find it beneficial to look at the range of checklists for parents, learners and teachers by following the link to the Addressing Dyslexia Toolkit - [Dyslexia Toolkit checklists](#)



2.7 Reflective Activity 3

In your reflective log there is a matching activity. Draw a line connecting the criteria for Scotland’s working definition of dyslexia in the left column to the everyday interpretation of these criteria in the right-hand column.



2.8 Key facts about dyslexia

Below are some key facts about dyslexia:

- It affects 1 in 10 people
- It has nothing to do with intelligence
- It is hereditary (runs in families)
- It is **life-long** and with the right support people with dyslexia can achieve their full potential
- It exists across **all cultures** and socio-economic backgrounds
- It often (but not always) **co-occurs** with other neurodivergences (e.g. ADHD)
- Dyslexia is **not a medical condition** or illness
- Both **boys** and **girls** can be dyslexic
- Dyslexia is different for everyone
- Visual stress and dyslexia are different (although some people can have both)
- Dyslexia can be recognised as a disability under the Equality Act (2010)



2.9. Reflection: Summary of key points

1. Part Two of this PLA helps us to understand how the PLA is situated within the Scottish educational context.
2. The Sean Connery Foundation Dyslexia Initiative and Mission Dyslexia and Mission Superheroes support a child or young person's wellbeing and provide guidelines for targeted intervention.
3. Placing the child or young person at the centre of any planning, assessment or support aligns with Scotland's legislative and policy framework.
4. Our conversations about a child/young person's wellbeing can be guided by the eight GIRFEC wellbeing indicators resulting in relevant and co-ordinated support.
5. The PLA briefly describes the inclusive and needs-led nature of Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence.
6. The Curriculum Improvement Cycle is currently reviewing the Scottish educational system with the intention of improving outcomes for all children and young people.
7. A 2024 survey in Scotland revealed areas of discrimination towards dyslexic people and unaddressed needs. The report 'Towards a dyslexia-friendly Scotland' makes several key recommendations to bring about change in this regard.
8. The Scottish working definition of dyslexia identifies the key indicators of dyslexia. According to this definition, dyslexia is a different way of processing language-based information. It exists on a continuum and is characterised by but not limited to, difficulties in reading, writing and spelling. This definition was updated in 2025 to acknowledge the consensus of a global study and now includes reference to post school settings.

Part Three. Understanding what living with dyslexia means

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In the section you will explore:

- The impact of dyslexia on wellbeing
- The impact of dyslexia on literacy
- The lived experience of dyslexic children and young people
- Mission Dyslexia and Mission Superheroes
 - Mission Dyslexia workshops
 - The success of the workshops
 - Where to find the Mission Dyslexia resources
- Two case studies

3.1. The impact of dyslexia on wellbeing

It can be a very disheartening experience for parents and carers and their young child to start school and find that learning to read and write doesn't happen as easily as expected or as easily as for other children. Nurturing their young child's self-esteem and building in the right support is very important at this stage. It is vital that educators are aware of this and that they support parents and carers in accessing meaningful and timely support relevant to their particular context.

Dr Gavin Reid explains the impact of literacy difficulties on a child or young person. This inevitably impacts the whole family:

"Dyslexic pupils often experience feelings of failure at an early age because of their difficulties with reading and writing. This can result in loss of self-esteem. It can be difficult to restore a positive self-image, but you should try to do this as early as possible, before this loss of self-esteem becomes too entrenched".

100 Ideas for Primary Teachers Dyslexia by Gavin Reid.



3.2 Reflective Activity 4

Consider the words and phrases below that might reflect a young person's loss of self-confidence as a result of literacy difficulties.

Use your Reflective Log to note your responses.

insecure hesitant capable fearful bold clowning around
anxious afraid assertive optimistic apologetic needy
decisive unsure self-assured avoidant hardworking
proactive

- Consider other words you may have thought of.
- Do you recognise any of these behaviours in your child/young person?

3.3 The impact of dyslexia on literacy

In defining literacy for the 21st century we consider the changing forms of language which our children and young people will experience and use. As the breadth of our definition is intended to 'future proof' it within Curriculum for Excellence, literacy is defined as:

"the set of skills which allows an individual to engage fully in society and in learning, through the different forms of language, and the range of texts, which society values and finds useful".'

Curriculum for Excellent Literacy and English Principle and Practice, (p3).

Literacy is developed through the interconnected skills of reading, writing, listening and talking. Dyslexia/literacy difficulties disrupt the acquisition of literacy skills and the confidence that this brings to children/young people.

Here are some behaviours you might notice in a child or young person that may indicate literacy difficulties.

- Avoidance strategies with reading and writing
- Expressed dislike of reading and/or writing
- Unexpected difficulty in learning to read and/or write
- Unexpected difficulty in remembering spellings
- Anxiety
- Anger
- Tearfulness
- Frustration
- Withdrawal
- Acting out
- Fatigue

Early intervention and appropriate support are key to a positive learning journey.

Educators and parents and carers are crucial partners in noticing and identifying literacy difficulties and supporting the child or young person's additional need.

Whilst being dyslexic can present many challenges to young people in school and beyond, it is important to recognise that, with the right support and learning/working environment, dyslexic people can realise their individual strengths and meet their full potential. Sir Jackie Stewart, the President of Dyslexia Scotland, who is dyslexic, says:

"We can all be good at something. We just have to find out what it is and go from there."

Whilst all dyslexic children and young people have unique potential and their own unique personal strengths, not all have extraordinary/gifted strengths. Educators need to explore each dyslexic child or young person's unique thinking strengths whilst being mindful that these may not be 'superpowers'. The 'Towards a dyslexia-friendly Scotland?' survey found that, "When asked if dyslexia is an advantage, only **17%** of participants believed it is, while **39%** felt it is sometimes an advantage". The survey report goes on to say,

"Although calling dyslexia a gift or advantage is well-intended, it can create unrealistic expectations. While some individuals with dyslexia may excel in areas like creativity or problem-solving, this isn't true for everyone. Emphasising these 'gifts' can make those who don't have these strengths feel inadequate and pressured. The positive stereotype of dyslexia assumes that people with dyslexia have specific innate abilities, but there's not enough evidence to support this. This stereotype can also cause people to overlook the importance of effort and new strategies, for success. Focusing too much on these strengths can be limiting."



3.4. Reflective Activity 5

'Dyslexia is an advantage.'

Discuss this statement drawing on your own classroom experience and on what you have read/considered in this module. It may help to record this in your reflective log.

Pros	Cons

Paul McNeill and Rossie Stone facilitate this journey of self-discovery for children and young people in their Mission Dyslexia and Mission Superheroes programme through the creation of their own cartoon superheroes. In doing so, children and young people find ways of building on their own personal strengths and exploring strategies that support them in coping with and minimising the ways in which dyslexia impacts on them. Paul McNeill describes this as “shrinking the dyslexia villain.”

<https://dyslexiascotland.org.uk/new-mission-dyslexia-resource/>

Many famous and successful individuals (including Hamza Yassin, Tom Holland, Keira Knightly and Jennifer Anniston) are dyslexic. Most of them describe their school experience as being very challenging because of their dyslexia but with support, determination, creativity and their own unique strengths, they shrink their “dyslexia villain” (as Paul McNeill says in Mission Superheroes). Although we are not all destined to be famous, we can identify with aspects of their stories, and we all have the ability to be courageous, persistent and successful.



3.5 Reflective Activity 6

Use your Reflective log to note your responses.

What activities require a level of literacy in the everyday lives of your pupils?

If this is a challenge for children and young people, consider how the difficulties could be reduced?

For example – reading a recipe in home economics



3.6 Reflective Activity 7

Use your Reflective log to note your responses.

1. Watch the films of some famous people speaking about their dyslexia.
[Famous people with dyslexia | Dyslexia Scotland - Dyslexia Scotland](#)
2. Choose one famous person's story that stands out for you in some way.
3. Why does it stand out for you?
4. Explain if and how their story has increased your understanding of dyslexia in any way?

3.7 Sharing the lived experience of dyslexic children and young people

The experiences of young people living with dyslexia vary immensely. As educators, it is imperative to look beyond the label of dyslexia and to understand the young person behind it. It is also important to recognise that not only do individuals experience dyslexia differently, but that individuals' needs can change over time and even vary between subjects at school.

Educators can learn from the lived experience of the young people in front of them and reflect on their practice to ensure that dyslexic young people can thrive in their classroom. The sections below share a range of lived experience stories from Scotland and highlight ways in which young people have been supported.

3.8. Dyslexia Scotland's Young Ambassadors

Dyslexia Scotland's Young Ambassador Programme was created in 2012 with the aim of raising awareness of dyslexia and to inspire other young people in Scotland. The Young Ambassadors are a group of dyslexic young people (ranging in age from 10 – 25) who share their own inspirational stories about living with dyslexia and their lives beyond school through short videos.

If you are interested in hearing more about individuals' experiences of dyslexia, follow the link below to **Dyslexia Scotland's Young Ambassadors'** page.

While the Young Ambassadors share their experiences of living with dyslexia, young people can also access [Dyslexia Unwrapped](#) which is an online hub for young people with dyslexia containing ideas, inspiration and tips on Dyslexia Scotland's website.

3.9. Mission Superheroes and Mission Dyslexia

Mission Superheroes and Mission Dyslexia are two closely related initiatives based on the Superheroes that were created by Paul McNeill and illustrator Rossie Stone.

Each Superhero character has its own strengths and challenges. Paul describes these strengths as superhero powers and shows how they can be used to minimise the impact of dyslexia. The superheroes demonstrate how discovering your own unique pattern of strengths and challenges is an important journey of self-discovery.

3.9.1 Meet the Superheroes

Both Mission Superheroes and the Mission Dyslexia workshops are based on the following characters:



Creatia



Persisto



Willforce

The traits of each character can be found in the table below:

Creatia		Persisto		Willforce	
Strength	Challenges	Strength	Challenges	Strength	Challenges
<p>Creative</p> <p>Comes up with solutions to problems.</p> <p>Sees things other people don't.</p>	<p>Sensitive to criticism.</p>	<p>Determined</p> <p>Never gives up.</p>	<p>Finds it hard to follow instructions.</p> <p>Emotional</p> <p>Asking for help.</p>	<p>He encourages others to be the best they can be.</p> <p>Emotionally intelligent.</p>	<p>Does not believe in himself.</p> <p>Finds it hard to organise himself.</p>

3.9.2 Mission Superheroes



Mission Superheroes is a free, short programme based on the Superheroes that can be delivered in primary schools. The programme endeavours to up-skill teachers while working with learners and their families to:

- Help P4-7 pupils to learn more about dyslexia
- Enable P4-7 pupils to find ways of building on their strengths and to discover how to overcome their dyslexia difficulties through the creation of their own cartoon superheroes
- Raise awareness of dyslexia and inclusive practice across the school community.

The workshops begin by asking the young people to identify the challenges that they face. From this they are supported to create their own superhero with strategies to help themselves. At the end of the workshops, children are given the opportunity to share and talk about their creation.

It is important to note that not all of the young people that participate in the programme are dyslexic. This is vital to the programme because the workshops are aimed at raising awareness across the school community – including learners, their families and education staff.

Click on this [promotional video](#) made by the Dyslexia Scotland Young Ambassadors where they talk about the Mission Superheroes Professional Learning Guide.

Watch the film below where Rossie talks about the Dyslexia Superheroes workshop.



Positive feedback from the workshops showed that they were a great success and children were found to be fully engaged and involved:

“The children were all chatting and discussing their superpower. It created a very inclusive and supportive environment.”

“It was clear they had a better understanding of their own strengths related to dyslexia and how to see this positively”.

All of the programme resources are available on the Addressing Dyslexia Toolkit for our Scottish Primary schools to use.

Select the link to access all the downloadable workshop resources.

[Mission Superheroes Professional Learning Guide | Addressing Dyslexia](#)

3.9.3 The Mission Dyslexia workshops

As part of the Sean Connery Foundation’s partnership with Edinburgh City Council and Dyslexia Scotland, funding was included for the delivery of Mission Dyslexia Workshops to schools across Edinburgh. Between 2022 and 2025, 43 workshops were delivered to 860 children.

These are some of the key ingredients for success:

- Someone who talks about their **personal experiences** of dyslexia at school which the children were able to relate to. This can contribute to in a positive rapport with the children.
- **Bring the characters to life.** The young people were introduced to the character’s personal challenges as well as their strengths and this really resonated with them.

- The workshops were **inclusive** - at no point was any child asked to identify as being dyslexic.
- The environment was a **safe** space for the children. This was achieved through setting a clear agenda. This meant that the children knew there would be **no surprises**.
- The children were **comfortable, confident** and increasingly able to discuss their personal challenges and identify their strengths due to two underpinning rules outlined at the beginning of the workshop:
 1. The room is a safe place
 2. You can't laugh at others
- The **cartoon aspect** of the books and creation of superheroes appears to have helped the children lose their inhibitions.
- The superheroes created by the children **facilitated a conversation** between them and their supporting adults. This allowed them to discuss and develop their own 'toolkit' of strategies to support them.

3.10. Case studies

Two case studies demonstrate how the Mission Dyslexia and Mission Superheroes Workshops have impacted on children and young people.

- Case Study 1. Trinity Primary School, Edinburgh City Council.
- Case Study 2. Comely Park Primary School, Falkirk Council.

3.10.1 Case Study 1: Trinity Primary School, Edinburgh City Council. Marika Komori

Trinity Primary School in Edinburgh City Council is one of the schools that participated in the Mission Dyslexia Workshops as part of the Sean Connery Foundation Dyslexia Initiative. The pupils at Trinity were “delighted” to participate in the programme and were so inspired by Paul McNeill that they dubbed him ‘Super Paul’.

Paul visited Trinity Primary in February 2025 and spent the afternoon with a group of Primary 5 and 6 learners. The feedback from the pupils at the time was very positive and they enjoyed being able to share their challenges and create their superheroes. Following on from the workshop, the pupils completed their Mission Dyslexia Workbooks in school and these were then sent home for them to share with the parents/carers. The pupils have subsequently created a banner with their superheroes and created a poster based on their Mission Dyslexia workshop.



As Trinity Primary is part of City of Edinburgh Council, all pupils in Primary 6 and above have been issued with their own iPads through the Empowered Learning Project. Pupils in the earlier stages of the school also benefit from access to shared iPads. As a result, the Strategies Groups have looked at and shared how they can integrate iPads to support their learning. Part 4 contains information from the pupils at Trinity Primary on how they use technology to support their learning.

Marika speaks very positively about the Mission Dyslexia workshop and particularly the lasting impact that it has had on her learners. She notes that they have become “really proactive” in bringing about change in the school. For example, three of the Primary 6 pupils created a breakout space in the school for pupils to work.

Taking their Message to the Scottish Government

The work that the pupils and teacher have done within Trinity Primary School is impressive. However, the pupils have not only brought about change in their own community. In May 2025, they were invited to attend the Cross-Party Working Group on Dyslexia at the Scottish Parliament to represent themselves and all dyslexic learners in Scotland. Read their report from their visit below:

“On Wednesday 28th May 2025, we were delighted to have been invited to attend the Cross-Party Working Group on Dyslexia at the Scottish Parliament and to represent Trinity Primary School and all Dyslexic learners.

We created a presentation about the strategies and tools which help us as Dyslexic learners, both generally and in school. We talked about colour tints, overlays and different assistive technologies which can help us on our iPad, such as speech to text and having your iPad read to you. We also talked about the groups which help us such as Read, Write, Inc and Fresh Start.

We were thrilled to share some initiatives which we have implemented in the school to help Dyslexic Learners, such as the “Breakout Space” which is where we have created

a quiet space where we can learn more effectively. Our aim was to raise awareness about what it is like to be a Dyslexic learner, some of the challenges that we face but also what we find helpful. We wanted to share some of the tools and strategies we use to be able to empower other Dyslexic learners and raise awareness of what can help others. Our aim is to inspire and educate people to be able to support everyone who may have Dyslexia but also enable young people with Dyslexia to be able to thrive and meet their potential”.

"It meant the world to me to be able to change people's lives and be an ambassador for people with Dyslexia."

Zara

"We really hope that what we spoke about will help to make a difference and allow young people with Dyslexia to do all the amazing things they want to do"

Georgia

"It has been amazing to have such brilliant feedback and to feel that we have so many amazing people supporting us and fighting for those who are Dyslexic learners."

Martha



Pupils from Trinity Primary visiting the Scottish Parliament. along with their teacher Mariko Komori, Paul McNeill and Oliver Mundell (MSP at the time)

"The staff who took the P6 students to the parliament were incredibly proud of the learners who continue to be superb ambassadors for all learners with dyslexia but are also inspiring individuals in their own right. Seeing these learners speak with such openness, honesty and confidence was inspirational and seeing the next generation raising awareness for Dyslexic learners in the future was a wonderful thing to experience."

Marika Komori, Class Teacher/Support for Learning Teacher

3.10.2 Case Study 2: Comely Park Primary, Falkirk Council, Sarah Switzer

The Mission Superheroes programme has impacted on pupils and schools across Scotland, beyond the workshops that were run in Edinburgh as part of the Sean Connery Foundation Dyslexia Initiative. Sarah Switzer's school, Comely Park Primary in Falkirk City Council, is an inspiring example of how the programme brought about change and had a lasting impact not only on the pupils but on the wider school community.

Mission Superheroes

"It was the opportunity to be involved with Mission Superheroes that changed things for me and for the pupils I worked with." Sarah Switzer

Comely Park was involved in the initial pilot for Mission Superheroes before Sarah joined the school in 2019. In early 2021, when she was invited to an online workshop with Paul and Rossie, Sarah invited a group of her Primary 7 pupils to participate alongside her.

Following the online workshop, her pupils made a pledge to help others understand dyslexia. They started by creating their own superheroes and helped to present part of the Mission Dyslexia workshop to the other Primary 7s. These pupils became the first Dyslexia Champions for the school and created a video and PowerPoint about dyslexia for the school's website before they left for high school.

In November 2021, Sarah used the Dyslexia Champions video when doing the Mission Dyslexia workshops with Primary 4-7, but she felt that it wasn't as effective as having the pupils there to help. As a result, new Dyslexia Champions were selected. This time there were four champions - two from P7 and two from P6.

In 2022, Sarah recorded a workshop on Mission Superheroes for the Dyslexia Scotland Education Conference, and the previous Dyslexia Champions were included in this. In 2023, Sarah's Dyslexia Champions group expanded to include anyone (whether dyslexic or non-dyslexic pupils) from Primary 6 and 7. They led Superheroes Workshops with the Primary 3s and 4s. As the older pupils had already completed Mission Superheroes, they created different workshops for them to complete.

The impact of the Mission Superheroes programme

Sarah was impressed by the immediate and positive impact that the Mission Superheroes programme had on her learners:

"The Mission Superheroes programme has really helped me to be more confident with my dyslexia, so I don't have to hide it from my friends. I know I have support around me and I want to help others with their dyslexia by being a dyslexia champion." Darcie

"I tried to hide my dyslexia from others because I thought it was a bad thing. Now from doing the work with Dyslexia Scotland, I realise that it's not that bad and I have strengths" Finlay

The Primary 7 pupils thoroughly enjoyed the responsibility of working with the younger pupils and leading them through the Mission Superheroes workshops. As a result, they were keen to reach a wider audience and presented to parents as well as writing several articles for the 'Dyslexia Voice', Dyslexia Scotland's magazine.

Lasting impact

While the Mission Superheroes programme had an immediate and positive impact on the pupils in Comely Park Primary, Sarah is proud of the lasting impact that it has had on the whole school community:

"I feel we have come a long way in changing and challenging what was, at times, a negative narrative around dyslexia... I believe the Mission Superheroes workshops helped frame their (the pupils) way of thinking, along with the continued dyslexia events and activities we have led. There is also a better understanding within our families and we have had some parents realise they too might be dyslexic."

Some of the activities and changes that have been introduced at Comely Park Primary as a direct result of their participation in the Mission Superheroes workshops include:

- The pupils visited their local Waterstones and have created a 'Dyslexia-Friendly' section in their school library including books with dyslexic characters in the text.
- They created a Dyslexia Mascot - Dave the Dog/Dyslexia Dave. Dave was designed as part of a competition and designed by a granny of one of the Dyslexia Champions. He accompanied the children on their visits to the local library and Waterstones, and dyslexia-friendly books have stickers of Dave on them, so they are easily identifiable.
- The Dyslexia Champions have held several parent workshops to share their learning and knowledge of dyslexia friendly approaches with the wider school. These workshops were particularly beneficial as families are now better informed.
- As a school, they implemented one-to-one meetings with dyslexic individuals to build a Strength Profile with them.
- They have prioritised time for dyslexia assessments.

- The school has also changed their approach to reading. Pupils now work with two separate texts: one selected to develop reading fluency, and a second designed to build comprehension, which they can access through appropriate, accessible formats. Sarah reports that this has had a positive impact on their attainment.
- Sarah also reports that as a school they are not just focussing on dyslexia but are looking at a wider range of neurodivergences and supporting all pupils.

These case studies demonstrate the powerful difference that Mission Dyslexia workshops can make when embedded within a school community. In both examples, the workshops supported learners to develop a better understanding of their dyslexia while also building confidence, self-advocacy and more positive attitudes towards learning. These learners also helped to raise awareness across the wider school, encouraging greater understanding among staff, peers and parents/carers and contributing to a more inclusive learning environment. Importantly, the examples above show that the learning from the workshops has extended well beyond the initial sessions, creating a lasting and meaningful impact across the whole school community.



3.11. Reflection: Summary of key points

1. Dyslexia has a profound effect on an individual's literacy skills and wellbeing resulting in lifelong challenges and struggles in most cases. These can impact on self-esteem and self-confidence regarding one's ability as a successful learner.
2. In supporting dyslexic children and young people, it is important to build on their strengths as well as helping to address their challenges.
3. You can watch some inspiring stories told by dyslexic young people by following the Dyslexia Scotland Young Ambassador links provided in the module.
4. Paul and Julie McNeill and Rossie Stone are the creators of the Mission Dyslexia and Mission Superheroes workshops. The workshops have encouraged many children and young people to think about their challenges from a strength-based perspective and to develop strategies that reduce the impact of dyslexia in their lives. They call this "shrinking the dyslexia villain".
4. Two case studies are included in the module. They both show how successful the Mission Dyslexia and Mission Superheroes Workshops are and the positive difference they make to dyslexic children and young people, their families, schools and wider communities

Part 4. From understanding to action: support strategies and tips.

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In the section you will explore:

- The challenges of being dyslexic and some compensatory strategies
- How to use the approaches and strategies of Mission Dyslexia and Mission Superheroes to support dyslexic strengths
- Dyslexic strengths/skills
- Protective factors
- Using technology to increase the efficiency of reading and writing

4.1. Challenges and compensatory strategies

Part Three of this PLA gives an excellent example of how the Primary 7 Strategies Group at Trinity Primary School (See Case Study 1 in the previous section) was given an opportunity to discuss and develop ideas in their follow-up sessions to the Mission Dyslexia and Mission Superheroes workshops with Paul McNeill (Author) and Rossie Stone (Illustrator).

Following this experience, the pupils worked together to identify the challenges of dyslexia as individually experienced by them and the compensatory strategies they developed to cope with these. The pupils worked together to identify the challenges that they face in their day-to-day life and organised them using the categories of associated difficulties that are outlined in the Scottish working definition of dyslexia.

- Phonological awareness
- Sequencing and directionality
- Reading fluency
- Short term and working memory
- Number skills
- Organisational skills
- Auditory and visual processing skills

When using the document, it is important to note that:

- The challenges identified by the Primary 7 group of children were **not all relevant to all learners**, but many learners found that they shared the same challenges.
- The challenges have been included in the **pupil's own words**.
- Below each section of the table is a row of additional strategies/top tips to complement those thought of by the children. These strategies are divided into those more suitable for educators and those more applicable to parents and carers. Educators should consider sharing these strategies with parents and carers. The pupils at Trinity Primary who wrote the first two columns have access to iPads and refer to this device in their strategies. Not all local authorities have iPads and a variety of different types of devices are used, all of which have similar apps and capabilities - see section 4.5.1 for further information on using technology to support a young person.



You can download a copy of the Top tips and Strategies for educators, all stakeholders and Parents/carers that the pupils created along with their compensatory strategies.

4.2. Using the approaches and strategies of Mission Dyslexia and Mission Superheroes to support dyslexic strengths and challenges.

By identifying and tapping into a dyslexic child/young person's strengths, we can further increase their ability to engage with their learning. The 'Towards a dyslexia-friendly Scotland?' survey states that,

"To support individuals with dyslexia effectively in Scotland, we need a balanced view that recognises both their strengths and challenges. This approach helps provide effective accommodations and creates a supportive environment that promotes their overall wellbeing and development. Additionally, we must address the stigma of dyslexia and ensure equitable access to resources and support across the country."

Mission Dyslexia and Mission Superheroes workshops follow this balanced approach by helping young people to become aware of their own unique profile of strengths and challenges and develop their own coping and compensatory strategies. In doing so they minimise the stigma of dyslexia. The workshops strongly encourage young people to speak up for themselves in terms of what they need for optimal learning. It is crucial that we, as educators, also learn to listen to children and young people. Their lived experiences will help us to understand their unique situation and help to build relevant support and meaningful ways to cope. It is also important that, alongside providing the necessary support, we, as educators, gradually transfer responsibility for engagement in learning from ourselves to children and young people.

4.3. Dyslexic strengths/skills

In the table that follows, examples of strengths/skills, are in the left-hand column. Again, it is important to note that not all dyslexic children or young people exhibit these strengths. A few, selected ways to support these strengths are in the right-hand column. These strategies are beneficial for all children and young people.

Strengths/Skills associated with dyslexia	Suggested support strategies
<p>1. Visualisation / visual thinking skills.</p> <p>Visualisation is the ability to use mental imagery rather than words to solve problems. A high percentage of dyslexic people excel at visualisation/visual thinking skills</p>	<p>Visual thinking/visualisation skills can be encouraged by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using mind maps, 3D modelling and visual aids to help structure ideas rather than relying solely on linear writing. • Using a comic format. Comics are an excellent example of visual storytelling. They support comprehension and reduce cognitive load by focussing on meaning rather than decoding • Comics/graphic novels allow reading for pleasure, something not often experienced by children and young people with literacy difficulties/dyslexia.
<p>2. Verbal skills.</p> <p>Verbalisers respond strongly to words. They are good at communicating, crafting and conveying clear and engaging messages</p>	<p>Verbal skills can be supported by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • allowing children/young people to demonstrate their knowledge through oral presentations, discussions, or video projects rather than written tests. • encouraging role play and drama • using pairs and partners to generate ideas and discuss texts or problems before writing • using concept maps with words instead of pictures
<p>3. Problem solving skills</p> <p>Many dyslexic children/young people have strong problem-solving abilities. They seem to have a strong sense of curiosity and explore ideas in a constant and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • thinking 'sideways', and finding connections between ideas not usually put together • exploring different perspectives • 'what if' thinking - exploring possibilities

<p>energetic way. They also have a strong ability to spot patterns and see trends in data for example.</p> <p>Another strong ability is to see the big-picture - seeing past details to understand the overall structure or future direction of a project.</p>	
<p>4. Creative thinking skills</p> <p>Exploring ideas is part of the creative process. Some dyslexic children/young people show strengths in creativity. They may be curious, energetic, and imaginative - good at designing new products or experiences, creating an original piece of work or giving ideas a new spin.</p>	<p>Creative thinking skills can be developed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing opportunities for creative, out-of-the-box thinking such as art/design projects • exploring ideas • developing and refining ideas
<p>5. Made by dyslexia say that dyslexic people excel in connecting and communicating - understanding themselves and being able to connect, empathise and influence others.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • structuring collaborative groupwork Collaborative learning approaches EEF • structuring peer support - both given and received • working with a partner

4.4. Protective factors: resilience, reading for pleasure and metacognitive (or strategic) thinking skills

4.4.1 Resilience

Many dyslexic people say they developed resilience as a result of their dyslexia. For example, Hamza Yassin, a renowned BBC wildlife cameraman, presenter, winner of Strictly Come Dancing 2022 and Dyslexia Scotland Ambassador, speaks in his documentary 'Dyslexia is Mother Nature's gift', about how the necessity of finding creative workarounds for his dyslexia during his school years fostered a strong work ethic and resilience, leading to unique problem-solving skills.

Paul McNeill and Rossie Stone, have likewise, used the ways they are personally challenged by dyslexia to complement their strengths. They have shown that dyslexia does not have to be a limitation but that, by using their strengths, it can fuel their innovation and ambition. In their Mission Dyslexia and Mission Superheroes workshops, they emphasise resilience and positivity.

The following are **key components** of resilience in dyslexia

- Support systems that offer emotional support and understanding.
- Focusing on personal strengths rather than just weaknesses.
- Connecting with other successful dyslexic people who can offer a new perspective on challenges.
- Viewing challenges and failures as opportunities for learning rather than insurmountable obstacles.
- Learning to speak for yourself/self-advocacy.

●

4.4.2. Reading for pleasure

Many children and young people with literacy difficulties/dyslexia avoid reading because it is such a frustrating task for them. Reading for pleasure can be encouraged by using:

- Audiobooks ("ear" reading)
- Comic-style books/graphic novels
- Texts that support personal interests

4.4.3. Metacognitive thinking strategies.

The [Education Endowment Foundation](#) says:

"learning to take strategic control of their own learning is very important for a dyslexic child/young person. This strategic control is called metacognitive thinking. Metacognitive thinking skills help a dyslexic young person to:

- Understand how dyslexia impacts on them as an individual and talk openly about it with an educator/parent/carer to build self-confidence;
- Develop proactive strategies, such as breaking down tasks and setting realistic goals to help manage frustration and anxiety;
- Understand their own learning preferences;
- Develop coping strategies and work towards independence;
- Understand what supports they need and that these will change over time and even from subject to subject.
- Developing these thinking skills take time and practice.



4.5 Reflective Activity 7

Use your Reflective log to note your responses.

As an educator, consider the point below:

- The personal interests a dyslexic child/young person in your classroom has
- Their personal learning preferences at school
- The strengths they show.

Fill these in on the table in your reflective log.

Personal interests	Personal learning preferences	Personal strengths

4.6. Using technology to increase the efficiency of reading and writing

4.6.1. Digital technology

The use of digital resources supports dyslexic learners by allowing them to focus on engaging with the text and understanding the content rather than struggling with the mechanics of reading. Not only does this help to build confidence and independence but it also ensures that the dyslexic young person can access material that would otherwise be inaccessible to them.

[CALL Scotland](#) have created a series of posters which provide very helpful information on using digital technology. These can be accessed in the list below:

[A Technology Guide to Creating a Dyslexia Friendly Classroom](#)

[ICT to Support Learners with Dyslexia](#)

[Android Apps for Learners with Dyslexia](#)

[Chromebook Tools for Learners with Dyslexia / Reading and Writing Difficulties](#)

[iPad Apps for Learners with Dyslexia](#)

[Reading and Writing Support on a Mac](#)

[Microsoft Education Quick Guides](#)

4.6.2. Digital texts

Digital texts allow learners to adjust features such as font style, size, spacing, colour contrast and background colour to suit their individual needs. Many digital texts can also be used alongside supportive tools such as:

- text-to-speech
- highlighting

- note-taking and
- built-in dictionaries.

There are several websites where educators can access and download digital copies of texts which are still covered by the copyright licencing legislation that can be shared with pupils with print disabilities. This includes children and young people whose dyslexia has a significant impact on their daily life. It is extremely important that the copyright rules and conditions are followed.

You can find more information CALL Scotland's **Books for ALL website**

[CALL Scotland - Accessible Texts](#)



4.7 Reflection: summary of key points

- Primary 7 pupils at one of the case-study schools worked together to identify shared challenges of being dyslexic and shared some of compensatory strategies they use.
- The pupils provide a useful example of how to use the approaches and strategies of Mission Dyslexia and Mission Superheroes to affirm strengths and support dyslexic challenges.
- Some strengths/skills are described and discussed with the important point being made that not all dyslexic children or young people exhibit these strengths but that all can benefit from teaching approaches utilise these skills.
- There are some protective factors that improve the learning journey for dyslexic children and young people. These are resilience, being encouraged to read for pleasure and developing metacognitive thinking skills.
- A reflective activity gives you, as an educator, the opportunity to consider what the personal profile of a dyslexic child/young person in your class would look like.
- The section concludes by showing how the use of digital resources can increase the efficiency of reading and writing

Part 5. Final Reflections

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5.1 Reflection and Next steps

Explore the MythBusters Activity on Dyslexia Scotland's website. You may wish you use this when sharing information with others.

[Busting dyslexia myths | Dyslexia Scotland - Dyslexia Scotland](#)

Self-Reflection

In order to reflect on the learning that you have undertaken, you may wish to repeat the short self-reflection quiz taken at the start of the module.

[PLA Completion Quiz](#)

Next steps

Consider how you may take the learning forward into practice.

Thank you for engaging in this Professional Learning Activity.

Feedback

It would be extremely helpful to receive your feedback about this module. We are keen to know about the parts you found useful and where you feel we can improve. This would help with the development of any content we provide on the Addressing Dyslexia Toolkit and future professional learning. Please contact us at the email address. toolkit@dyslexiascotland.org.uk

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HSBC UK

Appendix 1

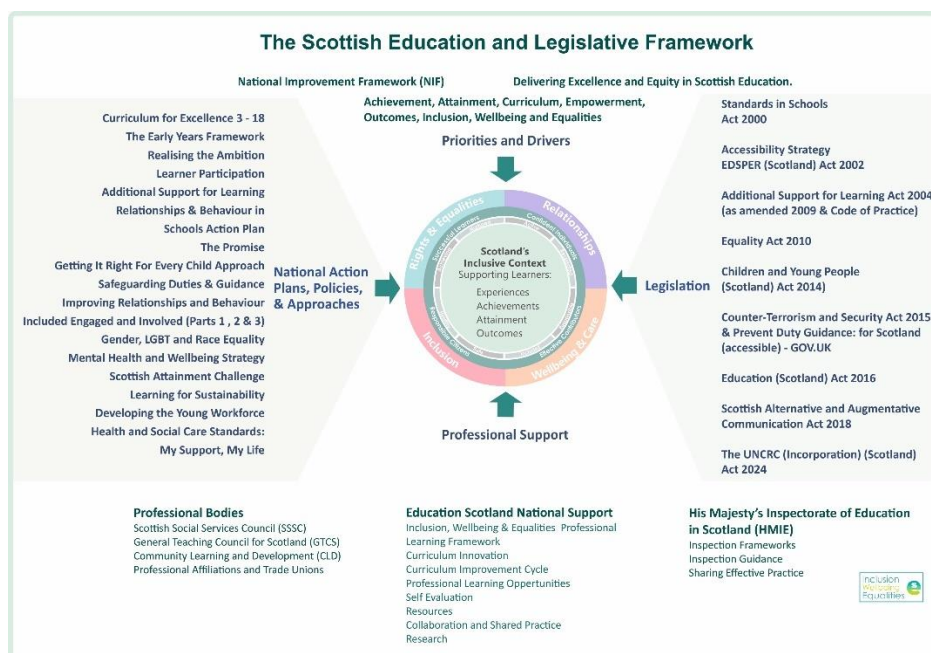


Figure 1. The Scottish legislative and policy framework.

Figure 1 reflects the central role inclusive education has in Scotland and illustrates the very wide range of legislation, policy, guidance and professional standards and supports which underpin inclusion.

Graphic Overview

The image is made up of two layered circles and four inward facing arrows towards the circle represent 1. Priorities and drivers 2. legislation 3. Professional Support and 4. National Action Plans, policies, and Approaches.

Central circle text

Scotland's Inclusive Education Supporting Learners:

- Experiences
- Achievements
- Attainment
- Outcomes

Outer circle text

1. Rights and Equalities, 2. Relationships, 3, Wellbeing and Care and 4. Inclusion.

Text surrounding the central circular graphic.

Four inward facing arrows positioned at each quarter of the central circles link each section to supporting all children and young people.

Priorities and Drivers

- National Improvement Framework (NIF)
- Delivering Excellence and Equity in Scottish Education.
- Achievement, Attainment, Curriculum, Empowerment, Outcomes, Inclusion, Wellbeing and Equalities.

Legislation

- Standards in Schools Act 2000
- Accessibility Strategy EDSPEER (Scotland) Act 2002
- Additional Support for Learning Act 2004 (as amended) and Code of Practice
- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014
- Education (Scotland) Act 2016
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and Prevent Duty Guidance for Scotland (accessible) – GOV UK.
- Education (Scotland) Act 2016.
- Scottish Alternative and Augmentative Communication Act 2018.
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation)(Scotland) Act (UNCRC Act) 2024.

Professional Support

Professional Bodies

- The Scottish Social Service Council (SSSC)
- The General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS)
- The Community Learning and Development (CLD)
- Professional Affiliations and Trade Unions

Education Scotland National Support

- Inclusion Wellbeing and Equalities Professional Learning Framework
- Curriculum innovation
- Curriculum Improvement Cycle
- Professional Learning Opportunities
- Self-evaluation
- Resources
- Collaboration and Shared Practice

National Action Plans, policies, and Approaches.

- Curriculum for Excellence
- The Early years Framework
- Realising the Ambition
- Learner Participation
- Additional Support for Learning
- Relationships and Behaviour in schools Action Plan
- The Promise
- Getting It Right for Every Child Approach
- Safeguarding duties and Guidance
- Improving Relationships and Behaviour
- Included Engaged and Involved, Parts 1, 2 and 3
- Gender, LGBT and Race Equalities
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy

- Scottish Attainment Challenge
- Learning for Sustainability
- Developing the Young Workforce
- Health and Social Care Standards: My Support, My Life.