

Dyslexia

At The Howard, students with dyslexia and visual stress bring valuable strengths and different ways of processing information. We support them to access learning effectively within a secondary setting. Dyslexia can affect reading, writing, spelling, and processing speed, while Visual Stress may impact how text is perceived, sometimes causing discomfort or distortion. We recognise that despite their ability, students may experience challenges with reading fluency, written work, and processing information.

What does support look like at The Howard?

We use clear, consistent strategies, including accessible resources, well-presented materials, coloured overlays where appropriate, and step-by-step teaching with additional processing time. Students have access to different forms of assistive technology which may include reading pens, audiobooks, DocsPlus software (see below for more information) alongside accessible reading books in the Learning Resource Centre (LRC). Targeted interventions, including Lexia and paired reading, support literacy development and confidence. Seating and classroom environments are carefully considered to reduce visual stress, alongside regular check-ins for understanding.

We work closely with families to ensure the right support is in place, monitor progress carefully, and adapt provision to promote independence, wellbeing, and success.

[DocsPlus - secondary writing support software](#)

Can my child be assessed for dyslexia at school?

Schools are not able to provide a formal diagnostic assessment for dyslexia. However, our Exams Access Arrangements Coordinator is qualified to carry out screening and standardised tests. These do not give a diagnosis, but they can identify difficulties and patterns of need that may be associated with dyslexia and help the school determine appropriate support and next steps, including whether further assessment outside of school may be recommended.

Does my child require a dyslexia assessment to access support?

No. Your child does not need a formal dyslexia assessment to access support at our school. We work closely with primary schools to build a clear picture of each student's needs in addition to our own robust screening process alongside analysis of attainment, progress and learning data. We also take account of staff observations and student, parent and carer voice when deciding on appropriate support. We follow a needs-led approach, meaning provision is based on the needs we identify in school rather than on an external diagnosis. For exam access arrangements, we adhere to JCQ regulations, which state that decisions must be based on the school's professional judgement and internal evidence, not solely on external reports.

How do I know if my child has dyslexia?

Dyslexia presents in different ways and occurs across the full range of academic abilities. There is no single profile, and many children with dyslexia are otherwise highly able.

The definition of dyslexia is complex and widely debated. While many people with dyslexia experience difficulties with phonological processing (working with sounds in words), this is not true for everyone. For some children, difficulties only become noticeable when the demands of learning increase, such as longer texts, greater written accuracy, or heavier workloads in later primary or secondary school.

If you are concerned, the British Dyslexia Association (BDA) dyslexia checklists can be a helpful starting point. These do not provide a diagnosis but can indicate whether your child's challenges may be consistent with dyslexia and whether further discussion with school would be helpful.

You can access the checklists here:

<https://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/dyslexia/how-is-dyslexia-diagnosed/dyslexia-checklists>

Further Information

Further information can be found on the following websites, links below:

<https://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/>
<https://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/dyslexia/neurodiversity-and-co-occurring-differences/visual-difficulties>
[Home - Made By Dyslexia](#)