

# Information Sheet



## 16. What to do if you think you're Dyslexic

### What is Dyslexia?

Dyslexia literally means "difficulty with words". It affects one in ten of us, some more than others, and famous dyslexics include Jamie Oliver and Richard Branson.

### Why does it happen?

Dyslexia is not related to intelligence. Someone may score very highly in IQ tests and also have dyslexia.

### What to do

If you suspect your child has dyslexia, the first step is to talk to your child's teacher and your school's Special Education Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO). At the meeting you can discuss your concerns and interventions that have been tried already. The first step is to ensure appropriate interventions are being taken by the school for your child. If your child continues to have difficulties despite these interventions, you can request they are referred for assessment and advice by a local educational authority (LEA) educational psychologist or other specialist in dyslexia.

If your child's teacher and the SENCO do not agree that an assessment is appropriate or required, you have further options. You can challenge the decision and request your child is formally assessed through the statutory assessment process by contacting the special needs department of your LEA directly.

### Support for people with dyslexia

**Dyslexia Action** centres will charge for the cost of the assessment, which can vary slightly from centre to centre but it is usually in the region of £300-£500. Employers, colleges and universities may make a contribution to cover some or all of the cost of the assessment. However, this is purely down to their discretion and they have no legal obligation to fund the costs of your assessment.

**The Eileen and Tim Healey Bursary** is specifically aimed at individuals who exhibit dyslexic traits and for whom support from the bursary would improve the prospects of further education or employment. The

# Information Sheet



maximum amount of funding is usually £100. There is provision for discretionary help in exceptional circumstances to be agreed by the committee.

**Cheshire Dyslexia Association** provides support for people with dyslexia or who suspect they have it. For further information, go to [www.northwichanddistrictyouthcentre.co.uk/cdawebbsite.html](http://www.northwichanddistrictyouthcentre.co.uk/cdawebbsite.html)

## **Irlen Syndrome**

An eye condition called Irlen Syndrome can cause eye problems for many people because it alters the way they see things. These eye problems are based on their visual perception. The eyes are not the main source of the problem. The problems are caused by the way in which the brain interprets the visual information that is being sent through the eyes. Having Irlen Syndrome prevents many people from reading effectively and efficiently. Individuals with Irlen Syndrome perceive reading material and/or their environment differently. It is estimated that many people who have been diagnosed with dyslexia actually have Irlen syndrome. People can be tested for this condition at Oldbury and Cruikshank Opticians based in Macclesfield; the test costs £115.