## Dyspraxia – Classroom Guidelines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dyspraxic Difficulties</th>
<th>Problems at School</th>
<th>Classroom Strategies</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hand to Eye Coordination</strong></td>
<td>Handwriting difficulties</td>
<td>Practice multi-sensory letter formation e.g. sandpaper letters, sky writing, rice trays. Use pencil grips, writing lines, stencils.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Hand to Eye Coordination</strong></td>
<td>Difficulties with dressing and fastening clothes. Using tools, utensils and cutlery.</td>
<td>Suggest loose-fit easy on/easy off clothing and Velcro fastenings. Break down each task into small sections to be mastered one by one.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Large Muscle Movements</strong></td>
<td>Difficulty walking in straight line, bumps into people and things. Difficulties running, hopping, jumping, catching/kicking balls.</td>
<td>Provide balance or wobble boards, walking on the line and hand to hand throwing using bean bags or water-filled balloons.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Attention/concentration</strong></td>
<td>Reacts to all stimuli without discrimination. Attention span is poor. Distracted in open-plan environments. Flits between activities. Disturbs others.</td>
<td>Allow child to choose activities which meet child’s own interests. Avoid disturbing child when on task. Avoid fluorescent lights, fluttering ceiling displays. Keep wall displays to a minimum. Promote a ‘no-disturbance’ culture showing respect for each child’s work space.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Conceptualisation</strong></td>
<td>Difficulty understanding concepts such as ‘in’ ‘on’ ‘in front of’</td>
<td>Play farm/zoo/journey games with command cards such as ‘cow in front of barn’ with correct picture on back of card.</td>
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<td><strong>Personal Organisation</strong></td>
<td>Generally poorly organised.</td>
<td>Supply time-tables, daily diaries and instructions for specific activities in sequenced picture cards.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Communication</strong></td>
<td>Unable to remember and/or follow instructions.</td>
<td>Get the attention of the child before giving instructions. Use simple language with visual prompts. Provide time to process the information. Use activities, demonstrations and pictures.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Speech. Language and communication</strong></td>
<td>Difficulty in explaining needs or answering a question.</td>
<td>Provide visual supports to help recollection of personal experiences.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Solutions</td>
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<td>----------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social skills</td>
<td>• Difficulty in retelling an incident.</td>
<td>• Use closed questions rather than open ended questions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• No concept of personal belongings</td>
<td>• Role play to develop understanding of the concepts of private and public</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Difficulty keeping friends,</td>
<td>• Have consistent explicit classroom rules</td>
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<td>• Difficulty judging how to behave in company</td>
<td>• Use social stories to explain the social rules and expected behaviour</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creativity/imagination</td>
<td>• Artwork and story telling immature</td>
<td>• Use role play and drama to explore different outcomes and scenarios</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Difficulty with time, sequencing ‘before’ ‘after’ ‘future’</td>
<td>• Timelines can help fix events in child’s mind</td>
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<td>• Teach from ‘concrete’ to ‘abstract’ by making concepts relevant to child’s own experience</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social skills and flexible thinking</td>
<td>• Difficulty coping with sudden changes, leading to anxiety</td>
<td>• Give advance notice of any changes</td>
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<td>• Use visual timetables</td>
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<td>• Give clear rules and consequences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flexible thinking</td>
<td>• Difficulty in understanding the feelings of other people and the effect of their own behaviours on other people</td>
<td>• Work on understanding emotions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flexible thinking</td>
<td>• Difficulty in using a learnt skill out of the learnt situation</td>
<td>• Use strategies such as comic strip conversations and mind reading etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sensory perception and flexible thinking</td>
<td>• Resistance to certain activities or situations</td>
<td>• Teach each skill in all the possible contexts and in different ways</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sensory perception and social skills</td>
<td>• Finds it difficult to concentrate</td>
<td>• Prepare for the change</td>
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<td>• Introduce to sensation gradually</td>
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<td>• Provide other options if the student cannot overcome the sensory difficulty</td>
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<td>• Introduce new sensory experiences using the child’s interests, eg messy play making aliens to get used to slimy texture</td>
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<td>• Give a distraction free learning environment</td>
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<td>• Reduce the social demands while learning</td>
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<td>• Permit time out if child is becoming over-stimulated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social skills, flexible thinking and communication</td>
<td>Difficulty in developing play skills and following game rules</td>
<td>Identify and focus on teaching necessary play skills such as turn-taking, negotiating etc.</td>
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