

Supporting pupils who find Maths difficult.



What is Dyscalculia?

Dyscalculia is sometimes called number blindness. It is the name given to the condition that affects our ability to acquire arithmetical skills. Dyscalculic learners may have difficulty understanding simple number concepts, lack an intuitive grasp of numbers and have problems learning number facts and procedures. Even when these learners produce a correct answer or use a correct method, they may do so mechanically and without confidence.

What we can do:

- Use concrete materials and start from practical activities.
- Establish the student's preferred learning style.
- Teach more than one way to solve mathematical operations.
- Build on pupil's existing knowledge.
- Try to understand the pupil's errors, do not just settle for wrong.
- Concentrate on one concept at a time.
- Language should be kept to a minimum and specific cues given for various mathematical operations in word problems.
- Encourage pupils to visualise mathematical problems. Allow pupils to draw a picture to help them understand the problem and ensure they take time to look at any visual information such as charts and graphs.
- In the early stages of teaching new mathematical skills we ensure that the mathematical problems are free of large numbers and unnecessary calculations.
- Provide examples and try to relate problems to real-life situations.
- Provide pupils with graph paper/squared paper and encourage them to use this to keep the numbers in line.
- Ask to explain verbally how he/she arrived at particular solutions.
- Explain new concepts in a logical manner.
- Encourage pupils to teach a concept back in order to check understanding.
- Ensure worksheets are uncluttered and clearly laid out and provide ample room for uncluttered computation. Ensure that the page does not look intimidating.
- Limit copying from the board.
- Allow pupils to use computers and calculators, especially to self-correct.
- Provide pupils with extra time to complete tasks and encourage the use of rough work for calculations.
- Directly teach the language of Mathematics.
- Always bear in mind the language of Mathematics differs significantly from spoken English.
- Use consistent mathematical language both in your classroom and throughout the school.
- Make use of mnemonics and visual prompting cards to assist pupils in memorising rules, formulae and tables. Repetition is also very important.
- Always match the strategy to the pupil's identified needs and abilities.