



Annual Report 2010-2011

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1 Message from Chair

This past year has certainly been eventful and challenging for the SEN community and for the Trust. Through our shared vision we bring together and provide a combined voice amongst the organisations working to improve outcomes for individuals with dyslexia and specific learning difficulties. We aim to provide reliable, unbiased information to parents, teachers, schools, local and national government. I think we, as a Trust, have responded robustly and well to the call to provide a combined voice. Our continuing active participation in strategic partnerships and linking with national initiatives extends the reach of each of our member organisations. As we noted when responding the SEN Green Paper, there has seldom been a time when there has been more focus on SEN.

Through our Trust programmes of work we have taken and continue to take an active role in helping to raise expectations and show how children and young people with dyslexia or specific learning difficulties can achieve great success. The collaborative programmes we have undertaken in the last few years and we are currently pursuing will provide valuable resources to the SEN community.

2 Directors' overview

March 2011 marked the end of the Trust's two year program of work which had been planned to take forward the initiatives and recommendations from the Rose (2009) report and the No-To-Failure project. During this second year, the hand-over of the administration of specialist teacher training funding to the Training and Development Agency (TDA) was completed. As well as maintaining a close working relationship with the TDA over the year, the Trust also secured additional capacity building funds for Training Providers and for the British Dyslexia Association's Accreditation board to ensure that sufficient places were available to meet demand. We understand from the Department for Education that a total of 3700 places have, to date, been funded under that scheme. Working with the TDA and Government on this funding initiative is something the Trust took on willingly, because of our view of the importance of increasing the numbers of specialist teachers, although this was not an activity for which we were funded.

Much of the work completed by March 2011 had rolled on from the previous year, although it was necessary to renegotiate the Trust's agreement with the DfE during the restrictions of the General Election Purdah and subsequent freezes and restrictions from the incoming Coalition Government. Core funding for the Trust was assured early, but some changes to planned work was needed, and formal confirmation of the Trust's funding came only in July 2010. This uncertainty introduced some delays in deliverables, but we were able to report in good time to the DfE and to disseminate work at our Stakeholder Day (in March 2011).

A Key Trust aim has been the development of expertise across the teaching workforce and the dissemination of information about what is effective. Our simple message is that dyslexia and specific learning difficulties should not be a cause of educational underachievement or failure, because we now know what works in terms of teaching, resources and other support to enable children to succeed. A second thrust of the Trust's work has been our effort to ensure that this knowledge and expertise is made available in all schools. This is being achieved by providing input and advice to guide the development of services for Government and training

agencies, training providers and individual schools and teachers. Major programmes of Trust funded work addressed these aims by:

- Developing and promoting a professional development framework to establish a consensus on the core skills and competencies required by teachers with various roles in teaching and supporting children with dyslexia.
- Publishing an on-line, searchable data base of effective literacy interventions
- Developing a suite of courses to train 'advanced skills teachers'
- Providing case studies and examples of good practice on our website

During the year to March 2011, the Trust, along with other bodies, had to reapply for funding under competitive tendering procedures. It was particularly encouraging that the priorities identified in the SEN Funding Prospectus so clearly reflected the Trust's Agenda – and indeed included wording from our previous proposals. The bidding process contributed to some useful collaborations and alliances, allowing the Trust to strengthen its network of associated organisations and expert advisors. A very positive outcome has been the new relationship between the Government's Strategic Partner for Special Educational Needs and Disability and the Dyslexia-SpLD Trust alongside its two sister Trusts (in Autism and Communication).

The Trust faces major challenges if it is to be sustained beyond March 2013. The original partners clearly saw the value in uniting behind a common message in order to make our voice louder and, potentially, have a greater impact. However it was always understood that there was a need to engage with other stakeholders as well as to revisit, with its partners, how the different bodies can best work together to achieve our common goals. The Directors see the next year as being a critical time – and a tremendous opportunity – for the sector to develop its impact and influence by combining forces and working together.

3 Projects and Activities

During 2010 to 2011 The Dyslexia-SpLD Trust supported projects that included working with the National Strategies, supporting local authorities, providing information and guidance to parents and schools and supporting the professional development of specialist teachers.

Working with the National Strategies

A key role of The National Strategies was to provide practical materials designed to help teachers and schools focus on the core business of improving teaching and learning. The Dyslexia-SpLD Trust worked from the Inclusion Development Programme (IDP) materials to build progression materials. These resources are drawn from existing good practice to inform CPD, stimulate thinking and develop good practice.

The Building on the Inclusion Development (BID) project strengthened the expertise and confidence of teachers and teaching assistants in primary and secondary schools in order to ensure the progress and achievement of children with special educational needs especially those with dyslexia.

Over six hundred learners accessed the courses with learning outcomes mapped to Professional Teaching Standards and to HLTA Professional Standards across all courses.

Supporting local authorities

The Professional Development Framework Project, delivered jointly by Dyslexia Action and Patoss, has brought consensus amongst members of the community as to the skills and knowledge required at different levels and for different roles supporting dyslexia-SpLD

The Framework provides an on-going, accessible web-based tool, a source of expertise and support for professionals seeking to develop their ability to more

effectively work with learners with dyslexia-SpLD. It also provides a road map for future developments in training, qualifications and accreditation.

The project has facilitated for the first time, an agreed approach to the additional knowledge and skills required of professionals working with learners with dyslexia-SpLD in a range of settings in a complex and sometimes contested field of knowledge.

The Trust worked with organisations supporting in-school intervention programmes to improve outcomes for children and young people with dyslexia and literacy difficulties. Helen Arkell Dyslexia Centre ran a Year 7 Transition project, which investigated the impact of 1-1 specialist teaching on the literacy skills and self-esteem of pupils in the first year of secondary school on the special educational needs register at 'school action'.

The young people receiving the intervention all showed increases in a range of standard scores when compared to those not receiving specialist support.

The Partnership for Literacy (P4L) secondary project, delivered by Dyslexia Action, combines literacy materials with apprenticeship training using a sustainable model. Lessons learned from previous work includes the acknowledgement that technology takes time, adaptability is critical to a successful partnership with a school, flexibility to deal with unforeseen interruptions is needed to keep work focused, schools vary considerably in their relationship with parents and balancing the demands of evaluation against the aims of the project takes a lot of consideration.

The Rose Report (2009) reminds us that many children supported by Teaching Assistants have co-occurring difficulties; The Trust supported Helen Arkell Dyslexia Centre to develop a Teaching Assistants course, accredited by NOCN, to help them support students with co-occurring difficulties in the areas of:

- speech and language
- dyspraxia
- numeracy
- ADHD

Information and guidance to parents and schools

This area of the trust's work is a direct outcome of recommendations set out in Sir Jim Rose's report (2009).

'Interventions for Literacy' a web-based guide, is an interactive tool for parents and schools. Professor Greg Brooks and Glynnis Smith, the producers of this resource, were both contributors to the Rose Report (2009). The guidance has three main features: a set of guidance for parents, a set of guidance for schools and a flow chart that includes the most effective literacy interventions/schemes currently available to schools. The tool provides useful resources including downloadable information sheets and case studies of the effective interventions listed to share best practice. An example of one case study can be found in Annex A.

The Parents' leaflet provides answers to the ten most frequently asked questions. Its intention is to provide clear, concise information using parent friendly language drawing from the pool of existing expertise within the Trust partner organisations.

The Trust also supported the British Dyslexia Association's Helpline, providing information and advice to teachers and parents on best practice in identifying and supporting children with dyslexia. This support facilitated:

- Extended opening hours, including two evenings per week
- Professional development training for Helpline staff
- Additional expertise through the recruitment of an additional qualified SpLD tutor
- The possibility to work towards establishing a self-sustainable model to further develop the Helpline.

The Helpline receives 20,000 enquires a year.

Supporting the professional development of specialist teachers

Rose (2009) recommended that teachers supporting children and young people with dyslexia should have a minimum standard of specialist qualification and should also

maintain a high level of continuing professional development. Supporting the professional development of specialist teachers is integral to The Trust's work. The Trust partly supported the SpLD Assessment Standards Committee (SASC) to develop and embed an authorisation for continuing professional development in support of SpLD Assessment Practicing Certificates and further the development of standards in diagnostic assessment of dyslexia-SpLD.

This work has demonstrated good collaboration between British Dyslexia Association Accreditation Board, the British Psychological Society and training providers to establish the outlines for this authorisation scheme.

The Trust also commissioned the British Dyslexia Association (BDA) to incorporate the additional recommendations of the Rose Review (2009) into the BDA Accreditation Board course criteria requirements for ATS and AMBDA accredited courses.

4 Stakeholder work-summary of stakeholder feedback

During 2010-11 The Governments Green Paper consultation process took place. This provided the Dyslexia-SpLD Trust with a platform for heightened engagement with voluntary and community sector organisations across the wider SEN sector. Since then our preliminary collaborative discussions has seen The Trust embark on work with partners on specific projects, with key allies on joint messaging and shared objectives, with expert advisors inputting into the SEN arena and with the wider stakeholder group; that is anyone interested in sharing the reliable information that The Trust disseminates. This is represented in the diagram 'Representation of The trust Stakeholders'. This area of work has gathered speed following on from 2010-11 foundations. A key area of development has been working closely with our colleagues at The Autism Education Trust and The Communication Trust. This has resulted in the three Trusts collectively being part of the Strategic Partnership Board, hosted by the Council for Disabled Children (CDC).

The Dyslexia-SpLD Trust collects the views and opinions of our stakeholders at events held twice yearly to report back to government. In March 2011, “A Framework for success – making best practice a reality” called for views from practitioners, local authorities, parents, the voluntary and community sector, the school workforce and further and higher education on key issues identified by The Trust. Our stakeholders’ top priorities included a need for clear policy and procedure on the identification and support for children and young people with dyslexia or specific learning difficulties. Also, continuing professional development in SEN for the school workforce, plus a need for this to be part of initial teacher training. They also asked for transparency of school SEN budgets and improved parental engagement in the provision of support for children and young people with SEN in schools. The Trust provided a feedback report for all stakeholders to view which was sent to the Department for Education. The Trust also incorporated this feedback into its programme of work for 2011 to 2013. The full report can be found at Annex B

Future plans

As part of The DST workplan for 2011-13, there will be further opportunities for stakeholders to contribute, potentially via information and training days and/ or on-line consultation. All details will be available on the Trust website.

www.thedyslexia-spldtrust.org.uk

Comments from the stakeholder day will be reviewed by The Trust Directors and Steering Group and will be fed back to government in our efforts to influence policy and will also guide project shaping. The 2011-13 workplan currently includes:

- Projects working with parents and schools to improve awareness, access and confidence
- Projects to improve training analysis and access for professionals
- Working across the sector and with government to provide information and to represent the sector.

5 Financial report - end of year accounts 2010-11

2010-11 Variance

In 2010-11 The Dyslexia-SpLD Trust met its objectives under the agreement set out by The Department for Education, with a 9% underspend. Between April 2010 and March 2011 there was a general election resulting in a change of government, through which a period of purdah resulted in delays to the grant agreement being issued by the Department. This impacted on The Trust's programmes of work which could not start in line with expected milestones.

Managing the Trust Programme and Contributing Expertise

During 2010-11 The Trust underwent structural review and operational re-organisation resulting in staff changes. This was a reflection that with increased activity a Directorship of 0.5 FTE was not sufficient to meet the needs of The Trust. The Steering Group and the Department, therefore, agreed to increase this to 1FTE split between 0.3FTE Co-Director Policy and Strategy and 0.7FTE Co-Director Operations. This resulted in overspend in the budget set aside for managing the Trust programme. It should be noted, however, that these changes took place after the budget was agreed by the Department. The shortfall in this budget area was always off-set against the budget set aside for contributing expertise which was underspent.

The Marketing and Advertising Freeze

In May 2010 the new coalition government imposed a general Marketing and Advertising freeze which meant that public money could not be spent on communications, advertising, publishing and public relations. The Trust had budgeted for this area which, under the new regulations, could not be used for things such as events, conferences, marketing materials and to some extent website development. This change is reflected in the underspend in this budget area.

6 Reference information

Structure

The Dyslexia-SpLD-Trust, or DST, is a collaboration of voluntary and community organisations with funding from the Department for Education. The current Trust structure was established in 2009 to bring together and provide a combined voice amongst the organisations working to improve outcomes for individuals with dyslexia and specific learning difficulties. It provides reliable, unbiased information to parents, teachers, schools, local and national government and acts as the main communication channel between government and the community and voluntary sector.

The DST member organisations are:

- British Dyslexia Association
- Dyslexia Action
- Helen Arkell Dyslexia Centre
- Patoss
- Springboard for Children
- Xtraordinary people.

Governance

It is governed by a Steering Group, which meets a minimum of three times per year and the current membership is:

Lynn Greenwold, Chief Executive Patoss, Trust Chair

Kevin Geeson, Chief Executive Dyslexia Action

Kate Griggs, founder, Xtraordinary people

Bernadette McLean, Principal, Helen Arkell Dyslexia Centre

Tim Mungeam, Chief Executive Springboard for Children

Dr Kate Saunders, Chief Executive British Dyslexia Association.

Management

The Trust is managed on a day-to-day basis by two Co-Directors:

Melanie Byrne, Co-Director (Operations)

Dr John Rack, Co-Director (Policy and Strategy)

The Directors are supported by a Trust Manager and a Trust Administrator.

Hosting

The Trust is hosted by the British Dyslexia Association (registered charity number 289243, company number 01830587) in their registered office: Unit 8, Bracknell Beeches, Old Bracknell Lane, Bracknell RG12 7BW.

British Dyslexia Association's Bankers:

Barclays Bank plc

Reading Branch

Mid Thames Group

PO Box 27

Reading RG1 2HD

Lloyds TSB Bank plc

1 Market Place

Reading RG1 2EQ

National Westminster Bank plc

Henley-on-Thames Branch

18 Market Place
Henley-on-Thames
Oxfordshire RG9 2AP

British Dyslexia Association's Solicitor:

Stephens and Son
Rome House
37 – 41 Railway Street
Chatham
Kent ME4 4RP

British Dyslexia Association's Auditor:

James Cowper LLP
3 Wesley Gate
Queen's Road
Reading RG1 4AP

Annex A Case study

Case Study: Excellent progress in reading and self-confidence achieved through a combined reading and phonics-based programme

Sally attends New Park Primary School in Harrogate, and was identified as a child who required a Wave 3 literacy intervention in 2009 when aged 6 years. Though Sally had received classroom-based support throughout the Foundation Stage she had made little progress in reading.

Sally was described by the school as a shy child, lacking in confidence and anxious when asked to read. Sally also had a history of intermittent hearing difficulties and had received speech therapy. Her parents were aware of her difficulties in literacy and concerned about her progress.

North Yorkshire introduced the Reading Intervention programme (Hatcher et al., 1994) in 2003 for those children who required an intensive intervention for reading. The programme is seen as an effective Wave 3 intervention and was listed in the DfES publication Targeting support: choosing and implementing interventions for children with significant literacy difficulties (DfES, 2003). North Yorkshire initiated a training programme to ensure all schools had access to a trained individual who could deliver the programme.

A teaching assistant from New Park School received training (4 days followed by tutorial support). A small group of three children in Year 2, including Sally, were identified through their progress data to receive the programme in the spring of 2009. At this point Sally had a score of 5.5 years on a standardised reading test. During the ten weeks of the spring term, Sally received thirty sessions of support, both individually and through group work.

The content of the programme included reading a variety of texts, phonological instruction using Sound Linkage (Hatcher, 2000), and writing.

The teaching assistant described how this was the first time she had worked with a

structured programme of intervention, and that she was able to see the impact. Sally, who had been given the lowest rating for general confidence at the start of the intervention, improved substantially and appeared able to concentrate better.

Sally made significant progress in terms of her phonological skills, her sight word reading, and the level of text she was able to decode. Her score on the reading test at the end of the ten-week intervention had risen to 6.8 years. This translates into a progress measure of 15 months in 2½ months, or an average of 6 months' progress per month.

Sally's parents were thrilled and delighted with the difference the intervention had made.

Annex B Stakeholder Day Report

Stakeholder Day

7 March 2011

Royal Horticultural Halls Conference Centre, London

Introduction

On 7 March 2011 (two days before the launch of the Green Paper, Support and aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability) the Dyslexia-SpLD Trust (DST) held an information and training day for Stakeholders, in central London. The aim of the day was:

- to disseminate information and best practice to the sector
- gather information to feed back to government
- add value to the work of the DST
- safeguard the weight and success of future DST work

Over 60 people attended the day from a broad cross section, including representation from;

- Schools
- Local authorities
- Universities
- Charities
- Trusts
- Practitioners

What we did

Sir Jim Rose chaired the day with keynotes from Brian Lamb OBE and Dr John Rack. The morning provided opportunity for stakeholders to ask questions and to learn

about and comment on current DST work. The afternoon was organised to gather the views of the sector by promoting meaningful discussion through facilitated workshops.

The following is a summary of our stakeholders' feedback.

How can parents/ key workers easily access reliable information on the range of support available to address their children's special needs?

The following was viewed as being essential:

- The existence of clear policy, applicable to all Local Authorities, on addressing SpLD linked to mainstream curriculum
- Policy should include identification and step-by-step intervention; this should be standard and transparent
- The existence of a key worker to liaise between parents and schools, supporting all but particularly those parents who may find it hard to communicate with schools
- SEN training, including SpLD, to be included in all initial teacher training
- School SEN budget be made available to Governor for SEN; information available to parents including on-line
- Time; for teachers to have dialogue with parents, to access sources of information
- Published pathways – clarity of offer and expectations and triggers for action

The following was viewed as being good practice:

- Parental involvement – encourage parents to support their children, for example through providing books and educational games to be read/ played with at home

The following was viewed as being aspirational:

- Clear links to speech and language staff, occupational therapists and health providers to identify and support co-occurring difficulties
- Information to be made available to parents on school workforce training and SEN expertise of staff

How do we ensure more transparency about funding and choice within the system for parents/ key workers?

The following was viewed as being essential:

- Accountability of SEN budgets including ring fencing, value for money and financial reporting
- Strong leadership and management including continual professional development in SEN
- SEN policy clearly identifying procedure
- 'Citizens Advice' - Trusted cadre of professionals who can give informed info and advice to parents and key workers
- For many parents communication is an issue, they rely on schools for information. LA should ensure schools have information to hand to parents/ carers

The following was viewed as being good practice:

- Awareness raising for parents on available services including costs and home support strategies to promote parental involvement and empowerment
- The importance of the SENCO role, as part of the leadership and management team, in monitoring and evaluation whole school SEN
- Good communication – time to talk – role of SENCO. Inclusive information available to all in a variety of formats
- Collaborative involvement of parents, school workforce and local authorities in determining use of SEN budget

The following was viewed as being aspirational:

- Involvement of children and young people in choice of intervention
- a national helpline where parents could get information on SEN according to their individual circumstances
- community based information sharing sessions with the support of educational psychologists and parent partnership
- The existence of a SEN parent budget

How are the needs of our pupils being met under the current funding regime?

The following was viewed as being essential:

- Clarity on resources – cut waste, know your budget and best use of funding
- Early action – ongoing, monitored, sustained interventions
- There needs to be education/training for parents with the aligning importance attached to this
- The senior management and/or governors of a school should be steered by a robust school development plan including a dyslexia/SpLD policy
- There needs to be dyslexia/SpLD expertise available and accessible to all schools and ultimately children and young people. The “dyslexia friendly framework” is a good starting point

The following was viewed as being good practice:

- More in-school specialist intervention
- more CPD in SEN for school workforce
- Whole class phonics based literacy
- Higher presence of assistive technologies
- Dyslexia friendly schools

The following was viewed as being aspirational:

- SEN CPD to be mandatory across the schools' workforce

How do we as stakeholders work together, to improve the outcomes for children and young people with SpLD/ Dyslexia?

The following was viewed as being essential:

- Wider engagement with parents by providing jargon free information, community based workshops on home support and support groups
- Intelligent involvement of children & young people in the development of the Education, Health and Care Plan
- Providing information in different languages, including the use of interpreters as necessary
- Encourage the view that support is not just the responsibility of the teacher but a partnership between school, parents and community
- Provide a consensus view to communicate with government
- Ensure all interventions are evidence based
- There is a need for parent engagement in an accessible way (not in writing and jargon free). A parent advocate would be helpful to be the coordinator or mediator between school and additional support/information
- Parents need to be offered informal meetings on their territory (community centres, libraries, Surestart centres including social media networks etc.)
- There is a need to pool expertise between multi-agencies to celebrate learners' achievements. COLLABORATION

The following was viewed as being good practice:

- Providing the mechanism for holding regular forums for idea sharing
- Provide the opportunity and platform for parental involvement in the review of SEN policy

The following was viewed as being aspirational:

- Multidisciplinary collaboration providing an holistic approach to intervention

Summary of top priorities

Amongst the answers there were overlapping themes and responses, demonstrating a clear concern, requirement or recommendation for improvement. These are listed below:

- 1) Clear standardised policy/ procedure map for identifying and supporting individuals with Dyslexia/ SpLD. Provision of guidance to practitioners and ensuring resources and methods are applied consistently across all schools and local authorities.

- 2) SEN Training across all staffing – potentially as part of basic training. Ensuring greater recognition of issues, identification and support and consistent approach across schools and individual classes.

- 3) Amount of SEN budget and use of SEN budget to be published by schools/ appear in annual reports. Greater accountability for the use of SEN budgets to ensure value for money and best application of funding. Also serves to inform parents and raise awareness.

- 4) Parents need to be engaged more in the process. Need to develop 'parent advocates' to support communication between schools/ Local Authorities and parents. The experience can be intimidating for some parents but they need to be encouraged to participate and should feel involved.