

Dyslexia Friendly Schools Project

Liverpool's Children's Services has been promoting dyslexia friendly practice in schools since 2002.

From 2002 – 2005 there has been the opportunity for all schools to access a free day's training from a British Dyslexia Association (BDA) approved trainer with an international reputation. Everyone attending the training receives a dyslexia DVD produced by Liverpool Children's Services. The training is delivered to everyone on the school staff (not just teachers) and also representatives from the school's Governing Body.

Because Liverpool was the first local education authority (LEA) to achieve Dyslexia Friendly LEA status conferred by the BDA, we have been able to award our schools with dyslexia friendly status if they meet the BDA's standards. The LEA has since been subsumed into Children's Services. Liverpool Children's Services is at present working closely with the BDA to develop dyslexia friendly Children's Services standards, and we expect to be the first Children's Services in the country with this award.

We award schools with dyslexia friendly status at 2 levels:

Level 1

This is a certificate awarded to schools that have had the training and have produced an audit of their current practice which informs a plan to develop dyslexia friendly practice.

The certificate recognises that the plan has been put into practice and level 1 standards have been met.

Schools produce documentary evidence which is assessed by the Inclusion Development Officers in the Raising Achievement branch of Children's Services.

Level 2

This is the full Dyslexia Friendly Schools Quality Mark (DFSQM) which has been available to schools since the spring term 2006.

Schools have to meet all the BDA's standards in the four areas:

- Leadership and Management.
- Learning and Teaching.
- Classroom Practice.
- Partnership with Parents and Pupils.

Schools conduct a self review of current practice against the standards and a team of officers from the Raising Achievement Service's Inclusion Team verify this review through a half day visit and a scrutiny of relevant documentation.

Successful schools are able to use Liverpool's DFSQM logo and receive a trophy at the annual Inclusion Awards ceremony held at the Town Hall every May.

The quality mark lasts for 3 years. As with any quality mark, it gives assurance of a high standard of daily practice, but does not imply perfection. Schools with the quality mark are still striving to improve their practice further.

For further information about the DFS Project or the quality mark please contact the Project Leader: sue.williams@liverpool.gov.uk