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Hello and welcome to the May edition of Contact for the B.D.A.!

As the voice for dyslexic people the British Dyslexia Association is shouting louder than ever with our many campaigns, including those on apprenticeships, GCSEs and the Initial Teacher Training. Calls and emails coming into our helpline about apprenticeships made it clear that appropriate adjustments are not made for many dyslexic students on the compulsory literacy and numeracy tests involved. Shortly, the Key Skills component within the Apprenticeship Awards will be replaced by the Functional Skills test. Worryingly, this test can be harder than GCSEs for many dyslexic apprentices to achieve. We are continuing to lobby, with the help and support of Lord Addington, for more dyslexia awareness amongst those delivering the components of the Apprenticeship Award (i.e. course providers); for dyslexia friendly delivery and for an increase in funding for specialist teaching support for dyslexic students. We hope that the soon to be published report by Peter Little OBE, will see that the Government introduce improvements for all disabled apprentices.

GCSE examinations are also a large concern due to changes that will disadvantage dyslexic students. The first is that from 2014 candidates will be penalised for poor spelling, punctuation and grammar. We raised an objection to this along with other disability groups in view of disability discrimination for dyslexic candidates. Ofqual took our concerns to Government and the Equality and Human Rights Commission have been made aware of the issue. In addition, we are alarmed that other changes mean that as of 2014, GCSEs will be examined by end of year exams and there will be no coursework. Finally, we fought hard alongside other dyslexia charities on changes to extra time requirements for GCSEs. B.D.A., Dyslexia Action and PATOSS argued strongly for the detrimental changes to be amended. Our proposal was welcomed by JCQ and Ofqual are now consulting more widely on the matter.

We aim to get 100,000 people to sign our Initial Teacher Training Campaign to get a mandatory minimum training on Dyslexia in the Initial Teacher Training. We believe prepared teachers will mean effective teachers and enable students to fulfil their potential. Find out more about the petition and how to sign on our website.

This is our 40th year and we will be celebrating with a Party on the very day, 40 years ago, that the BDA was founded: 17th November. There will be a 70’s theme, so please come along and join in the fun. We also hope that any local dyslexia associations will join in and organise their own ‘satellite’ parties on this day. All those who have helped to support dyslexic individuals and the BDA over these 40 years certainly deserve a party for all their hard work! More information on this can be found on our special B.D.A. 40 website, www.bda40.org.uk.

Of course all of our good work is supported by the amazing work others are doing. If you know one of these very special people: perhaps a volunteer who has gone beyond the call of duty or a teacher, teaching assistant or dyslexia friendly organisation that has given special care and attention and brought out the best in dyslexic individuals, then please nominate them for one of our annual awards. You can find a complete list on page 14. We look forward to having the honour of saying thank you to these amazing individuals, as well as celebrating talented dyslexic individual across the age ranges. Also, talented dyslexic artists, writers, and inventors are invited to submit their work to our competition and will have their work showcased at our Exhibition evening during Dyslexia Awareness Week 2012.

We hope you’ll join us at many of these events to learn, engage, campaign and celebrate our 40th year!

Dr Kate Saunders,
Chief Executive
**Initial Teacher Training Campaign.**

The Initial Teacher Training campaign is progressing very well, at the time of writing it has passed 11,500 signatures. The ultimate aim is 100,000 signatures so there is still many more signatures to get but we are absolutely delighted that so many of you have signed the petition and shared the campaign with your friends and family.

This petition simply calls for all teachers to be trained in dyslexia awareness. The most disappointing aspect of this is that a dyslexia module for teacher training already exists but has not been implemented by the government. Improved dyslexia training for teachers was called for in the Rose Review (2009) but successive governments have not introduced the proposals.

Dr Kate Saunders, CEO, of the British Dyslexia Association is calling on everyone to sign the petition “This petition is open to anyone in the country, whether you’re 7 or 70. All you need is an email address and 5 minutes of your time. We want you to sign this petition to make sure that everyone in this country is given the opportunity to reach their full potential, nothing more, nothing less.”

For more information on the campaign and how to sign the petition, then go to our website: [www.bdadyslexia.org.uk](http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk). To sign the petition go to: [http://petitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/20674](http://petitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/20674).

---

**WANTED!**

**MFL teachers to take part in pilot study.**

The B.D.A. is pleased to announce the start of the European-funded project, Dyslang (Dyslexia and Additional Academic Language Learning).

The aim of this project is to support the multilingual dyslexic individual in learning an additional curriculum language. The kick–off meeting of all partners (from Switzerland, Italy, Turkey, Czech Republic, Bulgaria and The UK) was held in Bracknell in January. A survey of needs questionnaire has now been developed and is being completed by teachers, trainee teachers and teaching assistants in partner countries. The results of this will be used to inform the e-learning course that partners are developing. The course will be piloted by MFL teachers who have at least one multilingual child in their class.

If you would like to take part in the project, please contact Jill Fernando at [jillf@bdadyslexia.org.uk](mailto:jillf@bdadyslexia.org.uk).

The website is now live at [www.dyslang.eu/](http://www.dyslang.eu/)
Dates for your diary – British Dyslexia Association forthcoming events.

**Employers Conference –**
13th September 2012
Central London
The Employers Conference will focus on the considerable changes in provision with the new Access to Work contract from November 2011, of which B.D.A. is a significant provider for dyslexia employees.

There will also be eminent speakers from the world of work and disability. Delegates working in the field will be able to attend for free.

**Multilingualism and Foreign Language Learning -**
26th September 2012
Central London
Featuring expert speakers, this conference will be focusing on issues surrounding dyslexia, multilingualism and learning a foreign language.

Speakers include:
- Dr Margaret Crombie
- Dr Tilly Mortimer and the Bath Spa University Research Team

**Supporting Specific Learning Difficulties in the Justice System –**
27th September 2012
Central London
This conference will focus on a range of topics including employment law in relation to specific learning difficulties and the practicalities of working with dyslexic clients.

Confirmed speakers include:
- John Mackenzie
- Melanie Jameson

**Dyslexia and Co-occurring Difficulties –**
8th November 2012
Central London
This conference, featuring expert speakers, will be focusing on difficulties that can co-occur with Dyslexia.

Confirmed speakers include:
- Dr Lindsay Peer CBE
- Professor Bruce Evans
- Steve Chinn
- Rosie Wood
- Dr Amanda Kirby
- Fintan O’Regan

**Assistive Technology: Solutions for Parents –**
24th November 2012
Wiltshire
The conference will focus on practical solutions for parents in assistive technology in the classroom and at home. Products and solutions will be showcased across a range of functions and will include a number of free and low-cost options.

Please note that these dates are provisional at the time of printing and may change. For the latest information on these conferences please see our conferences page on our website:

Alternatively, you can contact our conference team on conferences@bdadyslexia.org.uk.
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Save the Date!
Please put Friday 5 October 2012 in your diaries now for our 2012 O.M.s Day. We have a provisional booking in the Monro Pavilion at Wellington College in Berkshire.

Following the success of the 2011 O.M.s Day at Ernst & Young in London last September we are looking forward to another good turn out of O.M.s to hear the latest B.D.A. news, network over coffee and lunch, and hear some motivating speakers. Please let us know if there is a subject you would very much like to be covered – we will do our best!

Learning Support Centre Conference.
O.M. Danes Hill School, in Oxshott, Surrey was fortunate to have Professor Bob Burden (B.D.A. Trustee and Chair of the Accreditation Board) to speak at its 10th annual Inset on 17 March. Professionals from schools in the area heard Bob speak on ‘How our understanding of children’s perceptions of themselves as learners can help to improve learning outcomes’. Bob, whose long and distinguished career has taken him all over the world, is an inspirational speaker who spoke of the huge importance of the social and emotional aspects of learning. He exploded many of the myths such as ‘Intelligence is what I.Q. tests measure’ and, perhaps one for us to consider more carefully, ‘Unconditional praise leads to educational success and happiness.’ He persuaded us of the value of metacognition and ‘informational feedback’ so that children can develop accurate self-awareness and optimism.

Thanks to Laraine Ehrländer-Lawrence, Director of Learning Support at Danes Hill, for organising the conference and our warmest wishes to Bob Burden, who is currently recovering from a major operation.

Electronic Handbook.
Thanks to those O.M.s who have let us know they would appreciate The Dyslexia Handbook in electronic form. B.D.A. is currently working closely with the printers to have all future publications in as many formats as possible. This is still in the early stages but in the mean time we are able to let O.M.s have an accessible P.D.F. of the handbook. Would any O.M. who would like a copy of the The Dyslexia Handbook 2012 please contact us on membership@bdadyslexia.org.uk

B.D.A. Organisational Members’ logo.
At long last we have resolved the ‘small but important’ issues surrounding the use of the B.D.A. logo for O.M.s. A new logo is being designed which will say ‘Supporter of the British Dyslexia Association, B.D.A. Organisational Member’ which O.M.s will be able to use on their literature if they wish. As soon as this is finalised B.D.A. will send it to all O.M.s by email.

B.D.A. Training Day 2012.
We would like to invite O.M.s to the first O.M. annual training day. This free (one person from each O.M.) day programme will cover the nature of dyslexia, legal aspects for education and employment, appropriate support and what the B.D.A. does.

The training day will be held at B.D.A. premises in Bracknell on Friday 25 May, starting with coffee at 10.30am, breaking for a sandwich lunch and finishing at 3pm. The day will be suitable for new O.M.s as an introduction but will work equally well as a refresher for established O.M.s – we would be delighted to see
you all! A reminder will be sent to all O.M.s shortly by email but do please let us know now if you would like to join us on membership@bdadyslexia.org.uk

Independent Schools Association (I.S.A.) London West Area Meeting.

Nick Rees, Head of Abingdon School, representing O.M. Alpha Plus Schools, kindly invited Arran Smith, B.D.A. Membership and Projects Officer, to speak at their A.G.M., held at O.M. Fairley House School on 13 March. Arran spoke about the work of B.D.A. and the benefits of Organisational Membership to both the B.D.A. and O.M.s. Arran, who is severely dyslexic himself, was able to tell members a little of ‘what it’s really like’ with candour and humour as well as to let them know how B.D.A. and O.M.s can work together for mutual benefit. Thanks Nick for this opportunity to meet your colleagues!

Future News of O.M.s.

Do let us know any news of your organisation which you think would be of interest to your O.M. colleagues and the wider readership of Dyslexia Contact; email your news to media@bdadyslexia.org.uk. The next issue will be in September and copy deadline is 3rd August 2012. And if you are willing to write an article for ‘A Day in the Life of…an O.M. we would be especially glad to hear from you.

Day in the Life at Claro Software.

We develop computer software, including the ClaroRead speaking toolbar. This means that the office is quiet most days with people hacking away at computers, testing and coding and trying to work out the best way to make things work. There are screens and computers everywhere and people hunting down solutions on the web, reading documentation, discussing tricky problems or sometimes saying rude words at the screen. We also have individual little rubber ducks: if you get stuck on a particular problem, you describe the problem to your duck and that helps you to think it through!

We collect ideas for improving our software or for new products from partners, from users, from academic research, and from our own analysis and experiences. Every month or two we sit down and decide on new features and products and changes. At any one time we have a long list of Things We Could Do which we have to winnow down to Things We Will Do (by moving things to the No We Can’t Do and the No We Don’t Want To Do – the latter is far longer!) Then our developers work on the Will Do list. The hardest part is working out how to make things work easily and intuitively: it’s often easier to write a new program than work out how new a feature should fit into an existing one. Sometimes we get a feature all working, but then decide it doesn’t fit well into our products, so we remove it: sometimes we get a prototype to an advanced stage then shelve it. It’s not great when that happens, but it’s happened to every one of us at some point.

The coders are only part of Claro Software. The guys in marketing book exhibitions (or fend off other exhibitions we don’t want to go to) and prepare email shots to interested parties and update the website and create icons and images and splash screens and brochures. Production and support take calls from partners requesting product information or prices, end users, and plan business development like finding new partners or visits to existing partners. We sell to English and non-English markets, so there’s a lot of email and Skype with our overseas partners. We often have people out visiting partners and exhibitions, so a day might involve a business hotel and a demonstration at a university access centre and a train or drive home for some of us.

It’s a small company, which means we generally all get to pitch in sometimes – attending exhibitions, sometimes even packing envelopes. But it means we all know each other well and get some variety in our working days, so it’s a good place to work. And we have a lovely view of the Winckley Square Park in Preston – if it ever stops raining in Lancashire we can go for a walk!
London Marathon 2012.

On Sunday 22nd April seven brave souls ran in the name of the British Dyslexia Association. Each year we are very fortunate to have people prepared to give blood, sweat and tears in the name of charity and this year was no different. At the time of writing, the Marathon had yet to be run so details of times and final totals will be included in the September issue of Contact.

Even though our intrepid runners have completed the gruelling 26.2 mile course you can still support them by going over to their just giving page and sponsoring them.

Alex Tucker.
A keen runner, Alex was diagnosed with dyslexia at a young age but through help and support from family and friends he has been able to complete a degree in computing and now works in digital marketing.

http://www.justgiving.com/Alex-Tucker

Jayne Eccles.
Jayne is mother to two young children, one of which is dyslexic, and is delighted to be able to run on behalf of the B.D.A. and help raise awareness of dyslexia.

http://www.justgiving.com/jayne-eccles1

Jan Roberts.
Jan is also a mother to a young dyslexic and has experienced first-hand the struggles young undiagnosed dyslexics can suffer. Jan is a big supporter of our teacher training campaign and is keen to raise awareness to ensure that other youngsters don’t suffer the problems her own child had.

http://www.justgiving.com/Jan-Roberts0

Kevin Welstead.
Kevin is a keen runner and participated in last year’s event, achieving a very good time of 3 hours and 34 minutes. Kevin hopes to beat that time this year and we wish him all the best.

http://www.justgiving.com/Kevin-Welstead

Russell Payne.
Russell, like many of our runners, is dyslexic and also like many of our other runners, this is his first marathon.

http://www.justgiving.com/Russell-Payne1

Sophie Wood.
Sophie was diagnosed with dyslexia whilst studying for her Masters and is keen to support the B.D.A. and raise awareness to ensure that people are recognised early.

http://www.justgiving.com/Sophie-Wood5

Saul Charkham.
Saul is running in his first ever marathon for the B.D.A., and he hopes it won’t be his last. Being dyslexic, Saul is keen to raise awareness and support the work the B.D.A. does up and down the country in helping people of all ages.

http://www.justgiving.com/saul-charkham2
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Children Will Shine.

I can’t believe that we have passed Easter and are now into the summer term this is going to be busy time for the B.D.A. and the Children Will Shine projects. The projects that we are running in London and Manchester are going well. We have to thank supporters of Dyslexia Action in providing some resources to continue supporting dyslexic children we have in the project. We are using units of sound and the active literacy kit and this will help us to continue the mission of improving the lives of the children.

Over the next term will be launching two new workshops within Salford which will be working with the Salford Dyslexia Association and in Peterborough. This is to support the revitalisation of this local association over the next two terms. The B.D.A. and I will be looking at ways of how other Local Dyslexia Associations can use this model to support their own groups by the end of 2012. To find more information on the project please e-mail Arrans@bdadyslexia.org.uk

Giannina Zerilli, Accounts Administrator here at the British Dyslexia Association recently met The Fonz himself, Henry Winkler.

Happy Days indeed!

Question: How did Arran Smith, B.D.A.’s Membership and Project Officer spend his birthday this year?

Answer: Promoting the B.D.A.’s Initial Teacher Training e-petition at the Mayor of Croydon’s Charity Dinner.

Croydon Dyslexia Association is one of the Mayor’s charities this year and the dinner was one of a dozen fundraising events. Croydon DA will be using the funds raised to help set up dyslexic workshops for KS3 students.

(In the photo, from the right to left are: Arran Smith (B.D.A.), Lucy Taylor, David Crook, Jenny Crook (CDA Chair))
Success story: A colourful future.

by: Eleanor May-Brenneker MA.

Mia, a reserved, reticent, insecure, shy and timid little girl was fighting her way through primary school and experienced great difficulties with her short term memory, numeracy and literacy. Reading and writing always threw her and now that she was facing the transition to secondary education these problems were exacerbated. From now on there would not be just one class teacher for the year but a different teacher for each subject; not reading and writing as two subjects only, but it would be extensively needed for all subjects; there was not very little homework to face any longer, but every day lots of it to dread. That’s how Mia felt.

A huge, grey cloud was hanging over her when she entered her new school. Mia’s self confidence and self esteem dwindled. She could no longer make any spontaneous decisions and would therefore usually say, ‘You choose’ or, ‘I don’t mind.’ She experienced countless new challenges and subsequently problems with most subjects when carrying out regular homework, course work, revision and tests. Although the secondary school offered support sparingly, her parents sought external help intensively from a local qualified and experienced SpLD tutor. From this day the cloud lifted and the skies cleared. Mia was assessed and diagnosed as moderately dyslexic. Ample aid and support was now at hand just around the corner. She blossomed and grew visibly in self confidence. She relied on her strong subjects such as: Art, DT/IT, to underpin her weaker ones. Moreover, she applied her skills such as neat, colourful, attractive presentation of coursework, people skills, diligence and perseverance (to mention but a few) to achieve the necessary pass marks.

Her goal was to obtain sufficient GCSE grades to realize her one and only ambition: to become a qualified hair stylist. And she has brilliantly succeeded in achieving both. Her exam results were pleasing. She applied for an apprentice ship with three salons and was shortlisted by all three! Interviews followed and Mia was accepted by Vidal Sassoon: her dream was coming true! A new world opened, bringing along a myriad of new challenges and problems of a different kind such as: commuting to London daily, processing of a huge amount of totally new information, time management, organisation, preparation, and asking for help when needed. Her many strengths turned out to be her pillars of support. Moreover, she gradually developed successfully a positive approach to her daunting challenges. She also enjoyed ongoing firm backing from her Mum and family and invaluable help from her line manager, who was dyslexic himself. He fully understood her daily difficulties.

Mia put in maximum effort and applied herself 150%, always giving what was needed and that little bit more. She soon out-performed all those who started the training at the same time. This did not go totally unnoticed by the employer who soon upgraded Mia. She went from strength to strength, passed her stylist exams and excelled in ‘colouring’. Before long she was even occasionally put in charge of the colouring department and she started training new colourist apprentices. The crowning glory came when she was recently chosen as Vidal Sassoon’s colourist of the year, at the age of 21, after a nationwide competition. Mia has undoubtedly a colourful future ahead of her.
Dyslexia Awareness Week 2012.
Monday 8th to Sunday 14th October 2012

Art, Inventors and Writers Competition.

Once again we will be holding our Art, Inventors and Writers Competition and we want you to send in your entries.

We had an excellent response to last year’s competition and we were inundated with some fantastic entries across all three competitions and age ranges, as you would have seen in the previous edition of Contact magazine.

All three competitions are open to dyslexics in the following age categories:
(i) Primary school (ii) Secondary school (iii) Adult

Further details on the competitions can be found on our website, www.bdadyslexia.org.uk, in the Get Involved and Fundraising section.

B.D.A. Annual Awards.

Our awards are open again this year. The B.D.A. is inviting nominations for the following awards:

- Member Nominated Local Dyslexia Association 2012
- Outstanding Organisational Member 2012
- British Dyslexia Association’s Volunteer Award
- Lifetime Outstanding Contribution to the Field of Dyslexia:
  i. Volunteer Award
  ii. Academic Award
- Parental/Student Commendation for services to dyslexic individuals:
  i. Teacher 2012
  ii. Teaching Assistant 2012
  iii. School 2012
- Student Commendation for services to Dyslexic Individuals:
  i. College 2012
  ii. University Department 2012
- Entrepreneurs Award
  Age categories: (i) Primary school (ii) Secondary school (iii) Adult
- Outstanding Achievement Award
  Age categories: (i) Primary school (ii) Secondary school (iii) Adult

The deadline date for sending in competition entries and award nominations is 17th September 2012.

For entries in either the Art, Inventors or Writers competition, please mark clearly which competition you are entering and in which age category. Also, please include your name, age, address and the title of your work.

If you are sending in an award nomination, please send contact details for yourself, contact details for your nominee (as well as their age where applicable), the category of nomination and a max of 250 words supporting your nomination.

B.D.A.,
Unit 8, Bracknell Beeches,
Old Bracknell Lane,
Bracknell, RG12 7BW

If you have any questions about either the Arts, Inventors and Writers competition of the Awards then please contact us on:
Email: admin@bdadyslexia.org.uk
or phone: 01344 381551

B.D.A. Annual Awards 2011.

In the January issue of Contact, we listed those that had received awards at the Spellbound Ball. Unfortunately, that list was not complete. Please see below those that were not included in the January edition.

Lifetime Contribution in the field of dyslexia: Volunteers award.

Ann Keohane  Anne Benson
Charles Yates  Christine Pett
EA Draffan  Eleanor Wright
Frank Augur  Giannina Zerilli
Jean Hutchins  Jenny Crook
John Ingall  Judy Morrish
Kay Baylis  Michael Kalmar
Monyra Ispahani  Pamela Tomalin
Sally King  Samantha Fletcher
Sheila Gillott  Sue Willgoss

Local Dyslexia Association of the year.
Rugby & DDA.
Dyscalculia – a growing awareness...

Professor Brian Butterworth Emeritus Professor of Cognitive Neuropsychology, University College London.

Just as difficulties with reading and spelling were identified some 30 years ago as dyslexia, there is now a growing awareness that difficulties with arithmetic is also a recognised learning difficulty – it’s not just being poor at maths!

Latest research suggests that dyscalculia is a congenital condition, caused by the abnormal functioning of a specific area of the brain. In plain terms, the brain of a child with dyscalculia is wired in a slightly different way. This creates a major challenge for teachers, who often have not been taught how to recognise or support these children during their teacher training, or once in schools. It is essential that schools, colleges and universities provide additional training for all teachers who teach maths as to how to address these difficulties.

Children with dyscalculia find calculating using the four operations: addition, subtraction, multiplication and division difficult. Reliable recent figures do not exist, however based on historical figures there are approximately three to six percent of the population who are affected - these are children who only have difficulties with these aspects of maths. Other areas of their learning are not affected and may be average to outstanding. Dyscalculia appears to be prevalent in more males than females; to be inheritable, although not in all cases.

Dyscalculia is an ‘innate difficulty in learning or comprehending arithmetic’. It is important to discriminate between children with difficulties and those with dyscalculia. For example, some children have poor attention, working memory or spatial skills and may find maths difficult, but they are not necessarily dyscalculic. They are able to make progress with their maths in a way that children with dyscalculia can’t.

It has now been established that children with dyscalculia depend on simple strategies like counting on their fingers. Some children with dyscalculia also have memory problems and difficulties in reading or spelling (between 20 and 60 percent).

‘Catch up’ is not possible for dyscalculic children and they need extra help as early as possible from a specialist teacher. They don’t have a natural feel for quantities of numbers, a conceptual understanding of number or relative sizes; they can’t tell ‘how many’ without counting in ones, or see number patterns, or understand the place value system. They experience problems with all aspects of money, have a noticeable delay in learning to read an analogue clock and manage time. They have memory problems and find it demoralising that they constantly forget what they learn. They do not enjoy number work, so they develop avoidance strategies, such as going to the toilet and offering to do jobs in the classroom!

Some difficulties are unlikely to be symptoms of dyscalculia, for example reversals of numbers; this is a normal developmental stage which all children go through. Additionally, difficulty remembering names; there is no evidence to suggest that long term verbal memory has anything to do with dyscalculia.

What can you as parents and teachers do to help? There are activities and strategies that can be
introduced immediately, using computer games or learning through games and game cards instead of drilling arithmetic facts. Calculators may be used instead of memorising. Many people, who do not have facts well-memorised, may still be very good at maths.

Try to focus on your child’s understanding, especially of quantity, and use concrete materials to help link mathematical symbols to quantity, for example use counting rods (Cuisenaire), number strings, dice, dot patterns, caterpillar tracks and counters. Start at a level which your child is comfortable at, so that they experience some success, and slowly move to more difficult areas. Provide lots of practice for new skills and concepts and reduce the need for memorisation, by linking facts using logic. Ask a lot of questions to engage your child and get them thinking about their own thinking. Most of all, make learning active, and as much fun as possible!

Dyscalculia is a special need and requires assessment and diagnosis followed by appropriate support both in school and at home.

Professor Brian Butterworth is a world authority on the problems associated with dyscalculia and became involved with the area of dyscalculia when he was working as a neuropsychologist, he saw neurological patients who had selective difficulties with numbers, when other aspects of their mental abilities – for example, language and memory, seemed to be intact. This is called ‘acquired acalculia’. His team also saw patients whose mental abilities were really weak, but whose mathematics seemed still to be working normally. These patients suggested that there was a part of the brain specialized for maths, in particular, for numbers and arithmetic.

He then started thinking about how this specialization came about - that is, he looked at the development of mathematical abilities, and found that there were bright articulate children whose arithmetic was a disaster area. He recalls:

‘We found that these children were not only very bad at arithmetic, but were really unhappy and distressed by this, since even at 9 years old, they knew that maths was very important. They also told us that they felt stupid, that their teachers, parents and classmates thought they were stupid. And yet, not much was known about this condition back in 2002, and even now it is not widely recognised. You just have to look at the DfE website to see that our education ministry doesn’t even think it exists.’

‘Since then, there has been a great deal of research. We now know that the brains of dyscalculics are differently structured and activate in different patterns from typical children. We also know that the condition is inherited in many cases, though we don’t yet know what genes are involved.’

I asked Professor Butterworth what improvements he thought needed to be made to teaching:

‘We need specialized teaching, just as we need it for dyslexia. We need to use concrete materials for much longer and try to ensure that the learners really understand the concepts before moving on to the next concepts. Repetitive drills don’t help promote understanding.’

It is our duty to pursue the cause to ensure that children with dyscalculia are recognised and diagnosed promptly and appropriate interventions and teaching established as a matter of urgency. Numeracy achievement is the latest area of concern and dyscalculia should be slotted in as part of this agenda.

About the authors:

Lorrae Jaderberg and Katie Krais are highly qualified and experienced teachers with a long and successful history specialising in helping school children achieve their potential while at the same time supporting their parents. They offer advice and guidance in all aspects of education through their consultancy - Jaderberg Krais (www.jaderbergkrais.co.uk) along with their free resources website www.educatingtogether.co.uk.
My time here at the B.D.A.

By Sam Mapeley.

Hello my name is Sam and I have been a volunteer here at the B.D.A. for three weeks. Even though this has been a short amount of time, the role I have fulfilled here and the people I have met have left fond memories which I shall continue to treasure. My most enjoyable aspect of the time here at the B.D.A. has to be interacting and assisting fellow members of staff with the tasks and objectives that needed to be completed. Whilst here, volunteering at the B.D.A. has helped by giving me experience within an office environment.

My first impression of the B.D.A. was how nice, kind and helpful all my colleagues were, and my last impression was how valuable my time here has been. I think that moving departments and gaining experience in a variety of aspects of the charity such as helpline, finance or front desk etc would be incredibly beneficial to both the volunteer and the B.D.A. I would recommend people to volunteer here for the experience a role such as this provides and the chance to meet some wonderful individuals who are making a vital difference to an important cause. To further my career I plan to take the skills I have learnt here forward into another office orientated role. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone at the B.D.A. for being so helpful and making me feel very welcome. I will miss you all, I wish each and everyone here the absolute best take care.

Get involved! We are looking for more volunteers to help us at our friendly and bustling Bracknell Office. From admin to operations, volunteers have a powerful influence on what we are able to achieve and how we can grow. Come and join our energetic team and give a little time each week to make a big difference.

If you are interested then please email admin@bdadyslexia.org.uk.

Mapping Projects.

The B.D.A. and the Dyslexia-SpLD Trust have recently completed a joint project aimed at mapping the B.D.A.’s Quality Mark programme for schools to other similar schemes.

The objective of the joint initiative was to provide schools and other associated professional organisations with a clear “map” of where the criteria for the Quality Mark coincides with the Professional Development Framework (PDF), and the Inclusion Development Programme (IDP).

“We wanted to try to join together the dyslexia-friendly tools available to schools that wish to improve their provision and support for dyslexic learners,” explains B.D.A. Quality Mark development manager Joanne Gregory. “As all programmes overlap in some way, busy school staff will now be able to see how a scheme they may be considering links to one they have already done, or may be about to do.”

The B.D.A. Dyslexia Friendly Quality Mark is a two-year programme aimed at enabling schools to provide a framework of support and understanding for dyslexic individuals. Teachers who have completed the Quality Mark report that when schools change practice to accommodate dyslexic students, the result is good practice for everyone.

The two selected schemes were studied in detail and “mapped” against the quality mark criteria using a traffic light system to identify overlaps. The quality mark criteria were then “mapped” against each programme. “What has become clear,” reports Joanne Gregory, “is that there are many areas of common ground – schools looking to embark on the Quality Mark may find that if they have completed any of these programmes they may be further along this path than they realised.”

All schools should aim to be Dyslexia Friendly Schools. To find out more visit the B.D.A. website at www.bdadyslexia.org.uk or the Dyslexia-SpLD Trust web site www.thedyslexia-spldtrust.org.uk where you can download the mapped reports. Alternatively, contact Joanne Gregory, B.D.A. Quality Mark Development Manager on 01656 724585 or email her at joanneg@bdadyslexia.org.uk. In addition, the B.D.A. course criteria for ATS (Approved Teacher Status) and AMBDA (Associate Member of the British Dyslexia Association) courses have been mapped against the Professional Development Framework. Please see the B.D.A. or Dyslexia SpLD-Trust websites (as above) for details.
An exhibition roundup by Arran Smith.

BETT 2012.

Working for the British dyslexia Association enables me to represent the organisation at a number of exhibitions. In January 2012 myself and a number of volunteers and members of staff were at the BETT show, the largest exhibition of educational technology resources and as a firm lover of technology, I’m in my element.

Firstly though like to thank the volunteers from the all the London local associations for their support and a big thanks goes to Jean Hutchens who works behind the scenes and Chris Hossack and Alan Turner from Leicestershire D.A. in their support in setting up the stand and being there for all of the four days.

I’m going to take you on a tour of what I found the event and what took place these are my personal views and not of the British dyslexia Association.

This year at BETT at the entrance of the SEN zone was a company called Remtech and one of the products they were offering caught my eye was the LG scanning mouse, a device that enables you to scan pages from a book or document on to your computer. So a dyslexic can scan a letter they can’t read by clicking a button on the mouse and then using a screen reader makes printed text on paper accessible.

The B.D.A. has a very good relationship with Care Innovations, which is a GE and Intel company, brought a new product to the show called the Achieve Tablet which can scan and convert text in to audio. Also on Sights and Sounds stand were Kurzweil 3000 to screen reader enabling the computer to read too. Travelling round the show one of the B.D.A.’s organisational members Claro software was demonstrating the new version of Claro which I have found very useful in enabling me to listen to my e-mails and correct the content of e-mails. On the same stand were representatives from Nuance. Nuance has launched Dragon Naturally Speaking 11 which I have used to create this article.

As well as the B.D.A. giving out information about dyslexia and related topics like ICT and the initial teacher training campaign we have the opportunity to do a number of seminars. On the Friday it was my turn to talk about supporting dyslexic learners with a personal view looking at products that I use to support my dyslexia. A video of which can be found online at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EkE0kwIwcQ4.

E A Draffan is a member of the new technologies committee she also did a talk entitled ‘Making textbooks accessible to all’. The talk was very well attended and looked at the technologies that are currently in use and the limitations that they have. E A also looked towards the future and the role of digital in opening up textbooks to dyslexic students. E A was joined by Joakim Uppsäll-Sjögren from the Community Council of Helsingborg in Sweden. He talked about how assistive technology is used in Sweden to support dyslexic students.
The B.D.A. attended the Education Show at the N.E.C. Birmingham, and again this is a useful opportunity for the B.D.A. to give out information on such things like the initial teacher training campaign and the ICT resource disc.

This exhibition was well attended and useful questions were asked related to people’s personal situations. We have to thank Jean Hutchins and Chris Hossack once again for their support throughout the show and to all the Local Dyslexia Association members who volunteered on the stand.

Joanne Gregory, Quality Mark Development Manager at the B.D.A., delivered a seminar on dyslexia friendly schooling including how schools, colleges and other organisations can join the B.D.A.’s Quality Mark. This seminar was very well attended and had very good feedback on the stand.

Judith Stansfield, member of the New Technology Committee, gave an excellent talk on early identification of dyslexia, with the catchy title ‘Catch ‘em young’. She went on to talk about various means of assisting young dyslexics including assistive technology and multisensory tools.

Alan Turner, Arran Smith and Judith Stansfield manning the stand.
Mentoring Scheme: Project Completion.

The B.D.A. mentoring scheme, in conjunction with Cass Business School, City University London, and Dyslexia Scotland was launch following the publication of a number of academic papers, which reported on the relative success mentoring support can provide to adults, especially in a work environment. In mainstream organizations dyslexic employees are far less likely to be employed in management positions. However as research from Julie Logan, Professor of Entrepreneurship at CASS Business School (City University London) suggests, individuals with dyslexia appear to have strong entrepreneurial potential. In a report she claims that: “Dyslexics make up 19% or 600,000 of the 3.5 million entrepreneurial population in the UK but in the US 35% of entrepreneurs are dyslexic. The fundamental difference between the two groups seems to be their level of self-confidence. As there is a similar incidence of dyslexia in the general UK and US adult populations, one might expect a similar incidence in the entrepreneurial population. If dyslexics in the UK were provided with tailored training and mentoring to increase their skills and confidence, there could be an increase in the number of dyslexics creating new ventures. If US rates were matched, a further 560,000 dyslexic UK entrepreneurs would exist.”

It is our belief that if dyslexic people in the UK were provided with mentoring to increase their confidence, many more could unlock their potential to become business leaders and entrepreneurs. At a time when we need to find new ways to do business, dyslexics have much to offer UK PLC including: creative talents, alternative ways of looking at problems and finding solutions. Already dyslexics make up 20% of successful entrepreneurs and this figure could rise.

The central emphasis of the scheme was on two people getting together who share something in common - dyslexia. The scheme aimed to provide an opportunity for a mentor to share some of their coping strategies and above all instil confidence in the mentee. A principal of recognising the positive attributes of being dyslexic formed our core approach to the scheme. The scheme was conceived to celebrate the positive side of dyslexia and who better to do this than the individuals who have travelled the same road and who can act as a role model.

To support us in this endeavour the B.D.A. and its partners secured the support of several important personalities connected to dyslexia, mainly due to their own personal experience. It is pleasure to recognise the contribution made by so many, including; Jonty Hearnnden, Antiques Expert, David Richards, Chairman of Aston Martin, Sir Jackie Stewart, former F1 Champion, and Louis Barnett of Chokolit.

The scheme was established in two pilot zones in the London and Scottish regions and principally involved one-to-one meetings and group mentoring sessions. The scheme engaged around 150 individuals in specific mentoring activities and assistive technology training. This was kindly provided by our technology sponsors, who provided free products to those on the scheme.

Outcomes.

The mentoring group comprised a diverse range of individuals, with an equal mix of men and women from different ethnicities and socio-cultural backgrounds. Although it was initially assumed that the scheme would most appeal to people at the beginning of their careers, such as graduates, the majority of mentors and mentees were aged over 35 years. This suggests that the difficulties faced by adults with dyslexia are often overlooked as many had struggled to deal with the greater demands of management positions and so had remained in largely operational roles; despite the provision of functional reasonable adjustments.

The following case study is just one example of the positive impact mentoring has had for our group of mentees. Through mentoring Lydia found the confidence to establish her own company and give her the opportunity to work with her strengths. This compliments her dyslexia rather than competing with it and demonstrates the strength of her determination and creativity.
ADSHE was set up to share knowledge and to inform good practice in working with students with dyslexia, and other SpLDs, in Higher Education. ADSHE has since expanded its influence significantly and now has an active role in addressing relevant issues at a national level.

ADSHE aims to:
- Work towards establishing parity of provision so students will be assured of appropriate support throughout the HE sector
- Establish commonly accepted codes of good practice
- Allow members to share experiences and overcome feelings of isolation
- Provide CPD for members

Ten regional groups offer ADSHE members opportunities for CPD and networking.

Look out for details of our Professional Development Day in September 2012 and other training events.

If you are working with students in Higher Education please get in touch with us – through our website or by emailing adshedyslexia@yahoo.co.uk

Sibford School has a well-established reputation for enabling dyslexic pupils to achieve their maximum potential.

Our emphasis is on inclusivity.

Dyslexic pupils follow the mainstream curriculum while benefiting from specialist support which is tailored to meet their individual needs.

The school is currently home to some 420 young people, of whom around a third are dyslexic.

For further information call 01295 781203 or visit www.sibford.oxon.sch.uk

DyA AND BOARDING PLACES AVAILABLE

Sibford School was established in 1842 as a co-educational boarding school for the children of Quaker families. Today the school accommodates both day pupils and boarders, of all faiths and none.
Case Study: Lydia McKee, Founder of the Sugar & Lace Cake Company.

Lydia came to the mentoring scheme at a cross roads in her life. She had recently left her office job and to make ends meat started to produce cake for special occasions. This had been a hobby for sometime, however Lydia never considered it a serious way forward. This was until she recognised her own talent for cake decoration. Friends and family were also surprised and encouraged her to pursue this professionally. Lydia still held on to her doubts however, and acknowledges how her poor confidence held her back.

Lydia joined the mentoring scheme and was keen on being matched with someone who had previously established their own business and could ‘put my feet in the right direction’. Lydia’s mentor had done exactly this and currently works coaching individuals as a business advisor. With her help Lydia was able to plan, create and open her very own business: The Sugar & Lace Cake Company.

In the first six months of trading Lydia was nominated for two awards for Newcomer of the Year and Cake Topper of the Year by the Ice the Cake, a leading wedding consultancy. Lydia is thrilled by her success so far, she writes; ‘for the first time I really feel I’m doing what I’m meant to be doing for a job. I have met so many lovely people on my journey so far and new doors are opening all the time’. The mentoring process showed Lydia what was possible. Having her own business had been a dream for sometime but always seemed too distant and unachievable.

Most importantly this experience has taught Lydia how to have the freedom to be creative, outside of the constraints of mainstream organization and career.

The photographs are testament to Lydia’s creative talent.

Her story is evidence of the value of a supportive relationship, to grow businesses and to succeed.

www.sugarandlacecakecompany.co.uk
The British Dyslexia Association at 40.

We are all very excited here at the British Dyslexia Association as this year is our 40th year of activity.

Over the past forty years, public awareness and understanding around Dyslexia has come a long way, particularly in the fields of education, youth offending and employment to name just a few. We have helped by managing communication and dissemination projects, hosting annual conferences, delivering expert training courses to a wide variety of audiences, influencing Government at national and local levels and campaigning for positive change.

Although the gifts and talents of dyslexic people are more widely recognised today, there are still areas of society that lack the proper recognition or support to really make a positive difference to those with Dyslexia and their families.

So there is much to celebrate during our 40th Birthday year, but still much to do!

We are very excited that the Marlow Town Band will be holding a concert in our honour. On Saturday 6th October at the John Hampden School in High Wycombe, the Marlow Town Band will be performing music from the last 40 years. The Marlow Town Band are a 32-piece brass band that were established in 1906. We are absolutely delighted that they have agreed to support our 40 year celebrations, set to perform in the luxurious surroundings of the John Hampden School’s concert hall.

Tickets are available now and are priced at £8 for adults and £5 for children under 16. We also have a special family ticket which will admit 2 adults and 2 children for £20. For more information and to buy tickets, please contact Dominic Llewellyn-Jones on tickets@bdadyslexia.org.uk or 01344-281-559.

As well as the concert, throughout the year we are hoping that you will get involved in our ‘40 for 40’. We have come up with a diverse list of 40 Fabulous Fundraising Ideas with something for everybody, the list in full is on our special 40th birthday website, www.bda40.org.uk/get-involved.html. On there you will find all the latest news relating to our 40th birthday celebrations. We also have a history of dyslexia and the B.D.A.

But ‘40 for 40’ is not the only way you can get involved. We are creating a series of short films called ‘Dyslexia and me’, where we are asking people to talk about their dyslexia in 90 seconds or less. We would like you to make your own video or podcast to be added to our collection. These videos and podcasts will be loaded onto our site, www.bda40.org.uk/video.html and also showcased at our Exhibition and Awards evening during Dyslexia Awareness Week in October this year.

Advertisement
Despite the pleas from both individuals with Dyslexia and practitioners, Dyslexia research and practice has consistently tended to retain a focus on the negative aspects of Dyslexia. Much of the support for adults with Dyslexia has continued to focus on supporting their literacy difficulties, while also seeking to accommodate other difficulties in relation to speed, levels of concentration or working memory. We believe that the time has now come to re-shift the focus towards the positive aspects of Dyslexia.

In my PhD programme, supervised by Rod Nicolson, I will be developing a method to help and assist individuals to gain a greater awareness and learn more about their strengths. The aim of the research program is to allow individuals with Dyslexia to identify professions that are well suited to their individual profile of strengths. I believe that this will subsequently help them to develop the means to make strong contributions to their chosen professions; hence leading to significant benefits for the individuals, their organisations, and society in general.

Our approach is inspired by the influential new discipline of ‘Positive Psychology’ and involves three stages. The first stage is to identify the strengths that characterise different individuals with Dyslexia. The second involves an identification of the professions in which such strengths would prove most valuable. The third and final stage is to develop a method of characterising each individual’s profile of strengths and weaknesses in such a way as to help them choose specific careers which are suited and are most compatible with their strengths and interests.

The two quotations which follow (the first extracted from a text on adult Dyslexia and the workplace and the second written by the founder of Positive Psychology), both make the point that “working to one’s strengths” is the key requirement and prerequisite for a satisfied working life and that, as of yet, we have not solved this problem in relation to individuals with Dyslexia.

‘We are time and again quite staggered at the number of adults with Dyslexia who find themselves in employment which is inappropriate for their skills, and the specific demands of the job puts them under almost daily pressure. This type of situation clearly removes much of the pleasure and self-satisfaction from work. Feelings of frustration and lack of self-confidence can prevent a person with dyslexia from enjoying employment’

(Reid & Kirk, 2001).

‘… Curing the negatives does not produce the positives. … The skills of becoming happy turn out to be almost entirely different from the skills of not being sad, not being anxious, or not being angry’

(Seligman, 2006, preface).

I am determined that, with the help of the wider Dyslexic community, we will be able to identify what the relative ‘work strengths’ are for an individual with Dyslexia and thus help to create the appropriate working environments which would allow such a person to flourish. As part of the first step, we would like the dyslexic community to discover what their strengths are. Following this, we would like to see how we can effectively ‘craft’ and customise jobs according to each individual’s unique profile of strengths.

We would like to welcome anyone who is interested in contributing to and taking part in this research to please contact the research team at the University of Sheffield. A questionnaire survey will be available which has been specially developed for the participants.

We are asking for the contribution of, specifically, adults with Dyslexia who are currently employed.

We will be keeping the Dyslexic community up-to-date on the progress of this exciting research, which we are certain will make a positive contribution to the field of Dyslexia.
A Sense of Self: Psychotherapy and the Impact of Dyslexia.

It has struck me lately how many patients/clients with emotional difficulties have come to me in my practice of psychotherapy (both via the NHS and privately) who also happen to be dyslexic. In other words, they present with the familiar issues which bring people into psychotherapy: depression, anxiety, trauma, low self-worth, anger, difficulties with relationships, repressed feelings that have caused psychosomatic illness... The list goes on... They do not come with a presenting problem of dyslexia. However, as the personal material unfolds in the therapy sessions, it can transpire that, in the mix, is dyslexia.

I find myself thinking about the profound experience of being constantly fearful, confused, misunderstood and in trouble. We know this can be the lot of the dyslexic who has not had the benefit of diagnosis, specialist teaching and sensitive and insightful teachers and parents.

For many years- combined with other endeavours – I have been teaching dyslexic children, teenagers and adults in a range of settings, schools, further education colleges and privately. Later in life, I re-trained as a psychotherapist and work in both the NHS and private practice.

Since becoming a psychotherapist and still continuing to teach those with dyslexia, I have been turning my attention to the emotional impact of being dyslexic which, in some cases – and depending on how the problem is approached and treated- can have a deep effect and leave a long-lasting legacy.

This may be considered both from the dyslexic’s perspective, but also in terms of what becomes stirred up in teachers and parents; what is re-activated and triggered from their own personal life-script. Rosemary Scott (2004) writes of the way the problems of a dyslexic child can trigger conflict with a teacher by resonating with his/ her pre-existing personality problems and low self-esteem. Schlicter-Hiersemenzel (2000), a psychotherapist working with gifted and disturbed children contends that some teachers seem to be controlled by difficult, unreflected feelings that they are unaware of or avoid. Intrapersonal conflict, she argues, seems to be acted out in the relationship with an “unusual” child.

In specialist teaching interventions we like to think we enable dyslexic students and pupils to meet, step by step, with success, encouragement, and acknowledgement of achievement. This is so often not the experience of dyslexics who do not receive specialist interventions. Older generation dyslexics endured schooling where knowledge about the difficulty was less in the public domain and supportive, insightful and sensitive treatment was not the norm.

Something much deeper sometimes becomes internalised in those with dyslexia which contributes to the construction of their very core self and identity. Some of the patients I see have not necessarily made a connection between a low-level depression, feelings of inadequacy, low self-worth and their dyslexia, relating to how their difficulty was responded to and what was conveyed about their self-worth by significant and influential others.

Psychoanalytic theory has developed to encompass thinking about “object relations” which concerns the way the treatment by key figures – especially parents- becomes part of the internal template used for navigating the world. It is not an enormous leap to see how the treatment of those with dyslexia by the world of school and learning can be internalised in a way that develops an undermined sense of self: a self sometimes bedevilled by anxiety, self-doubt and confusion. As Rosemary Scott points out, “...most dyslexics spend their time at school veering between fear and outright terror.” (Scott, 2004, P.55)

As long ago as 1954, Maslow established that only a child who feels safe dares to grow forward healthily. His safety needs must be gratified.

In a recent article in the Times Magazine (Saturday, 14th January, 2012), Philip Shultz, - winner of the Pulitzer Prize for his poetry collection Failure and writer for The New Yorker - who only had a dyslexia diagnosis at the age of 58, poignantly describes his love of books: “I love everything about books, except actually reading them.” He explains, “Coping with anxiety, and avoiding it, has become a way of life for me.” He conquered dark feelings and deep doubts. His courageous words serve to inspire others in the emotional struggle: “There’s no little irony in the fact that the very things I couldn’t do have helped provide me with a profession and means of knowing...
myself; that I chose to master the very thing that
once hindered and mastered me; to own what once
owned me.”

Some of my psychotherapy patients lived at a
time of less enlightenment, recognition, depth of
research and quality of intervention in the realm of
specific learning difficulty. They have undergone the
emotional confusion of feeling and knowing they
are bright but having a faulty vehicle for expressing
this in ways that our education system values. One
such 50 year-old, presenting with depression, has
recently disclosed to me that she is dyslexic. She
described how she was sent to an inappropriate
special school provision where her peers were
severely impaired and with marked behavioural
difficulties. Such was the extent to which she and
her specific learning difficulty were misunderstood
and the resultant psychological impact. Many
others report punishments, humiliations and general
misery for failing to concentrate, spell or organise
homework. Such experiences can fall in the realm
of trauma which becomes re-played and reinforced
time and again.

Perhaps thoughts about the depth of the emotional
and behavioural impact of dyslexia were already
germinating when I first did my dyslexia teacher
training at the Dyslexia Institute in Staines many
years ago. We were required to conduct a mini-
research project of our choice as part of our
training. I took the opportunity to visit Wormwood
Scrubs Prison and talk to the Education Officer and
meet prisoners. It is widely known that there is a
link between lack of literacy and crime but I was
trying to probe further to discover whether this
“lack of literacy” sometimes has its roots in specific
learning difficulties. Studies have indeed found a
link, for example, Von Ebel (1980) reported that a
third of inmates in residential remand homes were
congenitally dyslexic. In some cases, crime is the
only communication available for deep psychic
distress. A forensic consultant to German courts,
Von Ebel analysed the erosion of self-esteem and
concluded that dyslexics’ treatment within school
was responsible for their resorting to crime to
the extent that their dyslexia was a mitigating
circumstance.

Psychodynamic psychotherapy theory places huge
weight on the way our early relationships and
treatment, not only affect our sense of self, but
also are the raw material for constructing that very
template for how we are in the world. This is borne
out by groundbreaking neurobiological evidence
(Schore, 1994) . Making links to behaviour and
feelings in the present to what has been laid down
in the past, is a cornerstone of this work.

Rosemary Scott writes compellingly and in detail
about these issues in her book Dyslexia and
Counselling (2004) including the effects of school,
teachers and peers, as well as the psychological
impact of being dyslexic. Needless to say, this all
points to the vital importance of early detection
and the education of parents and teachers into
the emotional impact on those affected. It may
also be that teachers should undergo some basic
counselling training to make emotional issues more
explicit. The absence of these can have deep a
psychological impact.

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Whurr Publishing
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2012, pp27-31

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She is a published haiku poet.

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Guidelines for Submission of Articles/Items for the B.D.A. Professional Supplement within Contact Magazine.

The Editorial Board warmly welcomes contributions from all those working in the Specific Learning Difficulties field or with an interest in this area. Articles can relate to teaching experiences, teaching suggestions, assessment, the work place, reports of personal research such as MAs or PhDs, reports from courses or conferences or reviews (of books, materials, ICT, videos etc.) These can be concerned with S.p.L.D. across the age ranges.

Guidelines for Submissions:
1. Articles can be of any length (250-3000 words).
2. Please send articles preferably by email, as an attachment, or on a disk in a WORD document format, font: Arial size 12 in black and white. If you do not have a personal computer, we can accept clear handwritten articles. Please send contributions marked for the attention of Contact Editor via the email admin@bdadyslexia.org.uk entitled ‘For Contact Professional Supplement’.
3. Any illustrations including photographs can be scanned into your document or sent on plain white A4 photocopiable paper. Graphs, photos and tables etc. can be included in WORD as an email attachment or sent on disk/C.D. or as a hard copy which can be photocopied or scanned.
4. Reviews should be as objective as possible, to give an accurate picture.
5. Readers may be mainly professionals working in the S.p.L.D. field and articles will be selected to reflect a wide range of relevant interests, age ranges and sectors.
6. Resources (books, websites etc.) cited should include details in full, including author, publisher, I.S.B.Ns and correct websites or email addresses.
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Dyslexia Practitioner Editorial Team:
Dr. Kate Saunders, Dr. Rebecca Larkin, Julia Carrol, Professor Ian Smythe, Professor Angela Fawcett.
1. B Active Brain Solutions.
   ActiVise software, for creating revision quizzes, has been radically updated. It now has a choice of font, colour and size, and easier handling of images. They are also producing banks of topics that can be loaded and amended or added to as required. Contents can be heard with Read & Write Gold. It requires screens of 14 inches or bigger.

2. Claro Software.
   ClaroRead for Mac now works with Pages as a separate toolbar which is remarkable for a Mac product. It allows for text to speech, text highlighting etc. Pages is a very easy to use Word processor which is compatible with MS Word but has the bonus of exporting to ePub to allow for use on many portable e-reader devices.

3. Crick Software.
   Clicker 6 remains very easy to use and allows users to create multimedia documents with the help of Word banks and easy image creation whilst staying on the page where the student is writing.

   The VoiceEye QR code maker and free reader app, for seeing the contents of these codes on an iPhone, won the Bett 2012 special needs award.

5. Inclusive Technology.
   5 new apps for iPad and iPhone are the start of a group of apps for younger users.

   Global Auto Correct has a new update due in the coming months that will offer users a larger vocabulary with instant changes.

7. Progress with Quest.
   Progress with Quest is a new program which uses the pedagogic structure of Hickey and the DILP (Dyslexia Institute Literacy Programme) as the basis for really good adventure activities. It has lesson plans, teaching resources, sound cards and interactive reading and spelling games for primary children. It covers single letter names and sounds, consonant blends and some consonant digraphs. The images and activities would still be OK for Y7s who need that support. Cheron Macdonald is one of the B.D.A. Teachers of the Year 2011.

8. Recite Me.
   For enabled websites, Recite Me offers their service of a toolbar with text to speech using the Cereproc voices for reading web pages. It was very quick and offered mouse over reading that was easy to use. They promise TTS for the derived plain text pages.
Northease Manor School is a DCSF and CRStEd approved co-educational Independent day and weekly boarding school for students aged 10 to 17 with Specific Learning Difficulties.

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“Northease Manor is an excellent school that provides a very relevant and very high quality of education for its pupils. The leadership of the curriculum and the quality of the education is exemplary. There is an outstanding curriculum that matches the individual needs of the pupils and promotes their self-esteem, confidence and skills of independence. This means that pupils achieve outstanding success in a range of skills, knowledge and understanding that prepare them very well for their future. Ofsted

To find out more or to arrange an appointment to visit us then please contact the Secretary: Northease Manor School, Rodmell, Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 3EY 01273 472915 office@northease.co.uk

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We donate £50 to the British Dyslexia Association for every Will purchased in response to this advertisement

Expert & helpful advice offered on planning, signing & witnessing your Will
9. Remtek.
The LG Scanner mouse working with MindMapping notes allows users to use the mouse in the ordinary way but also to scan over text and see it turned into a readable item on the screen that could be dropped into Mindmapping notes or any text document to be read with TTS. £80.

10. Sight and Sound.
The new Intel Reader is a slim portable tablet reader with camera coming out soon.

11. Spark-Space.
Spark-Space have revamped their web pages and added several new products including Essay Writer, a mind mapping system to guide users through the process of writing with subject dictionaries and 40 templates.

12. Tascam.
There is a very good microphone available for the iPhone made by Tascam and supplied by Canford for £40 (Tascam iM2) - this may sound expensive but if you have someone who needs very good quality recordings this can really help make the iPhone into a better recorder and can be used with the built in recorder or other apps.

Texthelp latest web apps are supplied with Read and Write.

Computers in schools... what is happening now?

By Di Hillage, Chair, BDANTC.

About thirty years ago the first computers started to appear in schools. Teachers looked for ways in which these new devices might help to teach their subjects. Many pupils became interested in creating their own programs and some went on to become the back bone of some of the major computer companies nowadays.

During the 1990s, my local dyslexia association acquired BBC systems that we could lend to dyslexic children who could then use word processing programs, with the wonderful free Speak utility that meant they could not only produce nice looking work, but actually hear it being read to them as well.

Technology has moved on considerably since then, but is it being used as effectively as it could in all schools?

Computers, in many forms, are everywhere nowadays. The wealth of information available on the internet can be accessed anywhere, not just in a reference library. Efficient use of a computer is assumed in most workplaces. The only people who now have to produce handwritten documents under pressure of time are students taking exams. Tools are available to enable even the most severely handicapped people to operate almost as effectively as their able companions. The Access to Work program and the
Disabled Students Allowances exist to ensure that disabled people are not prevented from working or studying effectively.

Yet there are still schools where dyslexic pupils are made to feel inferior and not allowed access to simple tools to help them. Schools which have spent thousands of pounds on computer hardware then employ adults to read and write for their dyslexic pupils in class and in exams, rather than encouraging them to use tools that would let them work independently. Some schools will not allow pupils to provide their own hardware and use it in class for fear that they may cause problems for the school’s network. Some network managers will not allow certain assistive software titles to be installed on the network. Some teachers will not allow a dyslexic pupil to use a computer in the classroom because they think it is cheating. I wonder if they allow their pupils with sight problems to wear their glasses in class?

Responses like this from a teacher suggest that some attitudes to computers in some schools are still somewhat outdated… “In our current paper homework system, they are learning literacy, spelling, numeracy etc rather than just ICT skills. For some of our students doing something on the computer and printing it off are not skills that they will need in their life – spelling, handwriting and numeracy are more important.” The idea that computers might help with the development of those skills does not seem to have occurred.

Pupils happily tap away on their mobile phones using predictive text but the feature is not available on their school’s word processor. Some teachers are using speech recognition themselves, but pupils who might benefit are not given access to this facility.

So what can be done? Obviously there are good examples of the use of technology as well and some contributions giving examples of good use would make excellent reading in future editions of Contact. If you have something to contribute please email bdatech@btinternet.com in the first place.

Scotland is providing digital text books and exam papers so that schools can save money by not have to pay readers and scribes for pupils, http://www.tes.co.uk/articles.aspx?storycode=2619419 and http://www.booksforall.org.uk/. The accessible Resources Pilot Project in England has shown a way forward http://www.altformat.org/mytextbook/.

There are hundreds of apps being developed for iPads and other small devices which are useful to dyslexic users. Some schools are issuing iPads to all pupils.

Another item in the international news… “The Norwegian community of Skien (about 100 kilometres south of Oslo with 25 schools with 6500 students aged 6 to 16) has provided a text-to-speech program (English and Norwegian), extended spell checker and dictionary, and software to read audiobooks free to all its students, to use at school and at home. They are also being provided with keyboard training (touch typing) and mind mapping. It will cost about 2 euros for each student every year. The head teachers were convinced after being shown a) that it was required under national disability and educational legislation and b) the effectiveness of the software. The biggest challenge now is to train teachers and students, and give information to the parents.”

If you have a dyslexic youngster or are working in a school, please help to raise awareness of the ways in which technology can help dyslexic learners, as well as their peers, so that they can all become independent and effective learners. We know that time and money are in short supply nowadays but, if properly managed, technology can help to save both of these. You will find lots of useful information on our website at www.bdatech.org and we welcome your feedback.

This is a comment from a teacher involved in the Accessible Resources Pilot Project.

“I have to say what I loved this afternoon was watching the students, the faces, the sheer excitement that they have about having something they can use. J & L are two of our most severe dyslexic students. Both are statemented and find it really hard to access material and have done so throughout their whole time here. J just said “I can read this” and it was wonderful. To see a child who really does experience difficulty across the curriculum find something that allows success is great.”
Brown’s School provides intensive support for pupils aged 6-16 years who have specific learning difficulties and social communication problems. A lively, creative and technical curriculum boosts confidence and promotes enquiring minds.

Brown’s School – Chelsfield, Kent
Tel: 01689 876 816
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By the end of 2011 literally hundreds of books will have been published devoted to the topic of dyslexia. For the most part they can be divided into discrete groups – books examining the aetiology and nature of dyslexia, (many of which are edited volumes with chapters that don’t necessarily relate to each other), books on assessment and diagnosis, summaries of research findings, and ‘how to do it’ manuals. What is rare to find is a book that attempts in a balanced manner to draw together these various strands, building sound principles for action from research and theory.

This may be why training courses tend to fall back on what have come to be seen as standard texts which try to perform this difficult task. The main problem here, however, is that knowledge about dyslexia has increased at an exponential rate over the past few years, thereby rendering many books out of date unless they have recently been revised and improved. When faced with the question of whether we need yet another book on dyslexia, therefore, the answer must surely be ‘it all depends’. What it depends on is whether the book is offering anything original without totally dismissing or ignoring all that has gone before.

As a starting point for any establishment in the process of setting up a specialist training course for teachers of dyslexic students one would really need to look no further. At the same time, it would be difficult to imagine a better text to meet the needs of any PGCE course seeking to respond in a positive manner to the B.D.A.’s current campaign for the provision of structured input into all initial teacher education.

The book is essentially divided into three parts. The first part provides chapters summarising each of the main theoretical approaches to understanding dyslexia, all of which are drawn together by means of an extremely helpful diagram. Included also are brief but pithy overviews of how reading skills develop, the relationship of reading to spelling, the role of handwriting in modern education and the increasingly pertinent issue of dyslexia in learners for whom English is an additional language.

What I particularly like about these chapters is that they provide a first rate introduction to each of these areas without pretending to be completely comprehensive, they provide excellent up-to-date references to make follow up possible and, most specifically, each chapter ends with some sensible implications for practice. One of the book’s greatest strengths lies in its down-to-earth nature. I would like to have seen a little more space devoted to the psychological consequences faced by those struggling with dyslexic difficulties, to which only passing reference is made, and some mention of recent perspectives on dyslexia as a form of deficient executive functioning, but this in no way lessens the book’s impact.

The second section of the book provides the principles, teaching strategies and programme structure underlying a multisensory teaching programme entitled ‘Conquering Literacy’, which has been constructed from the principles derived from the theories and research described in section one. Like many other programmes, this is based upon the work of Gillingham and Stillman, and Cox, but it’s up-to-date, down-to-earth and flexible and, to my mind, really does offer something new and refreshing to an area that is in danger of looking rather tired. Chapters are provided on lesson planning, dictionary work and the importance of memory training. Reference is made also to the role of study skills, but this is probably the weakest segment of the book, a minor ‘blip’ with its overreliance on Buzan’s Mind Maps as a major revision technique.

The final section of the book not only takes the reader through a step by step approach to overcoming even the most severe literacy difficulties, but is crammed with enough examples of activities and reproducible resources to satisfy both novice and experienced teacher alike.

The Rose Report recommended that training courses for teachers of dyslexic children should be set within the wider context of teaching literacy. It also advocated that understanding dyslexia should be a feature of all initial teacher education courses. What Kelly and Phillips have done is to provide a text which not only addresses these issues but goes that important step further in describing exactly what to do about it. The very flexible nature of the programme means that there is something here for everyone according to their need at any one time. Unlike so many texts purchased by students during their training years this is one that will be drawn upon again and again long after the training period has been completed. I have no hesitation in recommending it as one of this year’s best buys.

Bob Burden.
L.D.A. News.

The newest Local Dyslexia Association is Dyslexia North East. It was formed in 2005, and is the only L.D.A. in the North East region. Tyneside Adult Dyslexia Group closed and its members joined D.N.E. Before that, there was a Central Tyneside D.A.

Dyslexia North East is very active. It has 60 members, and many others on its network. Liz Ferguson sent this news for the Local Association Board in March. Regular meetings are held at The Royal Grammar Junior School in Jesmond, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE2 4RX and also at Kenton Bar Primary School NE3 3YF on two Thursdays of the month in term time, from 6:30pm to 8:30pm

- Activities this term have included:
- Fun and activities for all the family.
- Story Time With Starry Suzanne.
- Movement and Balance activities.
- Barebones Story Walk.
- I.C.T. Programs to try out on the Computer.
- Eye Movements In Reading: An Investigation Of Dyslexia And A.D.H.D.

A very special Day Conference for Parents/Teachers and Health Professionals has been organised for Saturday June 16th 2012 at the Life Conference & Banqueting Centre in Newcastle with Andy Dalziell from the Movement and Learning Centre in Scotland, and Lee Pascal, an experienced Dyslexia Teacher and Trainer. Lots of activities and information will be planned. Booking Forms and information are available on the website.

Any questions - please e-mail Liz at info@dyslexianortheast.org

See more details of Dyslexia North East on http://www.dyslexianortheast.org

See Liz on BBC ‘Look North at dyslexia’: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/7846099.stm

We welcome Dyslexia North East to the B.D.A. and send good wishes to its members. We hope to see D.N.E. members at meetings, but they are 300 miles from Bracknell and London.
History lessons for pupils at Stanbridge Earls School, Romsey, can be accessed by increasing numbers of students thanks to the Assistive Technology for Independent Learning project (ATIL). The School educates children aged 10-19 with Specific Learning Difficulties such as Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Dyscalculia and Speech & Language Difficulties.

Mrs Visser, Head of History, says: “Stanbridge Earls School began a 2-year trial of ATIL last September. These tools enable pupils to organise their ideas and demonstrate intelligence and knowledge. We have already found that pupils using this superb advanced technology, combined with traditional methodologies, are gaining greater understanding and achievements, helping them to rise above the difficulties that confront their every day learning.”

Our pupils who study History can use the available technology in many ways to suit their individual needs. For example, written text in the form of books, primary and secondary source material, websites and documents can be ‘read’ to the students, if required, using the software provided as part of the project. This consequently reduces the fear of not being able to read as a barrier to studying History.

Making coherent, structured notes also becomes possible. By using the excellent Mind Mapping software they are able to structure key points and incorporate visual images into their planning. This can also aid revision and independent learning.

Another element of the ATIL project allows for the development of subject specific word banks coupled with the use of word prediction. This enables students to write essays of a length and fluency they thought they may never achieve.

The ATIL project also provides software for audio files that have been created by the student or teacher, to be easily linked to relevant text and images. These aid note making and revision dependent on the student’s individual learning style. Some History students are using speech recognition software to write essays and create notes.

With the help of ATIL our students can study History and pursue their interests through to GCSE and A level regardless of their individual educational needs. Assistive Technology combined with the History teachers’ knowledge and understanding of SpLD pupils can consequently ‘level the learning playing field’.

The History department at Stanbridge Earls School also develops the importance of active learning to promote historical understanding and knowledge throughout the school. All year groups visit historical sites and museums to aid their understanding. For instance, Year 9 students visit both the Black Country Living Museum and The Imperial War Museum’s excellent Holocaust exhibition to enhance their empathetic skills. The department also runs an annual History trip to relevant places of interest; for example Berlin, Auschwitz, Ypres, Normandy, and Russia. These tours are open to all students interested in History, not just those studying GCSE or above.

The subject of History at Stanbridge Earls School is consequently open to all regardless of any Specific Learning Difficulty thanks to the ATIL project and members of staff that understand the needs of the Students.

Peter Trythall, Headmaster, said: “Stanbridge Earls has now commenced the trial of assistive technology, monitored by Oxford University’s Kellogg College. This initiative further enables us to help children with specific learning difficulties to fulfill their potential by building confidence through exceptional facilities and teaching.”
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Meaning, Morphemes and Literacy
Essays in the Morphology of Language and its Application to Literacy
E Neville Brown and Daryl J Brown

Meaning, Morphemes and Literacy takes a retrospective look at the research that led to the establishment and continued success of the Maple Hayes Dyslexia School and Research Centre in Staffordshire. Even today, Maple Hayes is the only school in the world that takes an integrated morphological approach to literacy acquisition.

The book details the theoretical underpinning of the morphological school of thought, along with its application in a range of learning environments, developing the system beyond mere morphology and into an overall theory of language in terms of semantic primes.