

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 7 July 2015 at 5.30 p.m., Room C1, 1st Floor, Town Hall,
Mulberry Place, 5 Clove Crescent, London, E14 2BG

SUPPLEMENTAL AGENDA PACK ONE

This meeting is open to the public to attend.

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For further information including the Membership of this body and public information, see
the main agenda.

7.5 Tower Hamlets Council's Approach to Support Staff with Specific Learning Difficulties **All Wards** **1 - 10**

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APPENDIX TWO

Research on Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLDs)

Dyslexia – is a difficulty in acquiring good literacy skills, including reading, writing and spelling. It affects about 8-10% of the population and is the most common and widely understood of the SpLDs; this is mostly due to its direct impact upon academic success, job prospects and career progression. Dyslexic individuals are often fearful of highlighting their difficulties in public.

Common workplace difficulties described by adults include the following:

- Takes longer to read documents than colleagues
- Difficulty with structuring a document and spelling
- Lack of self-esteem to ask questions or for help, and may appear anxious
- Problems remembering; for example appointments, bringing the correct paperwork to meetings
- Filling in forms especially if handwritten
- Poor organisational skills
- Problems disclosing to others that they have dyslexia for fear of the consequences

Dyspraxia – Developmental Co-ordinator Disorder (DCD), also commonly known as dyspraxia, is a motor co-ordination disorder affecting about 2-3% of the UK's adult population and impacting on everyday life skills. DCD/Dyspraxia is distinct from other motor disorders like stroke and cerebral palsy.

Workplace difficulties may include problems with writing at speed and legibly, organisation, time management and planning skills and taking information down at speed.

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)– is a spectrum of difficulties that affects communication, social relationships and behaviour. It includes Autism, Asperger's Syndrome and Pervasive Developmental Disorder Not Otherwise Specified. The 'spectrum' element of the disorder means that whilst all individuals with ASDs share similar traits and difficulties, their condition will affect them in different ways and to varying degrees. Approximately, 1% of the UK population is affected by Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Difficulties in the workplace include a reluctance to communicate their difficulties and the impact they have. Lack of confidence asking questions or asking for help; difficulties with social understanding which may result in the individual's behaviours sometimes being misinterpreted by others.

Source: The Hidden Impairments: A specific learning difficulty guide for employers
Professor Amanda Kirby and Dr Ian Smythe
Do-IT Solutions (2013)

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APPENDIX THREE

Presentations from Field Experts

Dyslexia in the Workplace

Margaret Malpas – Co-Chair of the British Dyslexia Association (BDA) and Founder of Malpas Flexible Learning Ltd

Background

- Dyslexia affects the working memory; being organised
- England is 22nd for literacy and 21st for numeracy out of 24 OECD countries (OECD, Oct 2013)
- The study shows that there are 8.5 million adults in England with the reading literacy of a 10-year old.
- Equality Act (2010) states that reasonable adjustments must be made to provide fair access to services

Reasonable Adjustments

- In work, for employees with dyslexia and other SpLD which generally include:
 - Assistive technology
 - 1:1 coping strategy training
 - Awareness training for colleagues and managers (Access to Work will fully pay for awareness training in the workplace)
 - Potentially a support worker (this could also be a colleague/manager)

What is Reasonable?

- An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves:
 - Unreasonable costs
 - Timeframes
 - Affects the security or integrity of the assessment

Access to Work

- UK Government scheme providing funding for adjustments beyond which the employer should make
 - Communication support for interviews etc.
 - Assistive technology; awareness training; coping strategy coaching; support workers
- The faster you access this scheme, the better it is
- BDA provides:
 - Workplace Assessor's Accredited Training which includes online training for your organisation, dyslexia assessors and champions, solutions covered by 'Access to Work' funding
 - Employer's Guide
 - Coping strategies will be fully funded

BDA Workshop: Workplace Assessor Programme

- British Dyslexia Association's Workplace Assessor Programme:
 - Group cost £4,000 to £6,000; individual £1,400 (9 month programme)
- Dyslexia – common challenges
 - Difficulty in prioritising and sequences
- Workplace Challenges:
 - Report writing
 - No support from colleagues, isolated
 - No correct tools
- Future Workplace Challenges:
 - Lots of changes in new role(s)
 - Lack of coping strategies
 - Alien environment
 - Partnership working
- Full diagnostics assessment can be quite costly, especially in London
- Workplace Needs Assessment can be done through 'Access to Work' or organisational workplace assessment

Reasonable Adjustments

- Multi-sensory approach; checklist; pneumonics; get someone else to proofread/check work; proofreading technique (read backwards); voice activated software (for those who are keen on IT equipment)
- 1:1 coaching
- Colour coded notebooks
- Over-lays
- Organisational training
- Different trays to distinguish priority; audio device
- Teach processes

Outcome

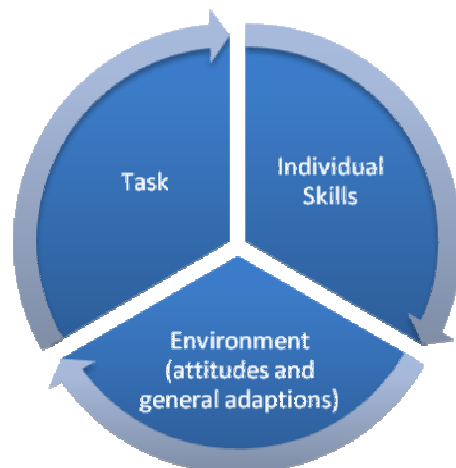
- Helping employer understand and implement reasonable adjustments/support framework

Developmental Coordination Disorder

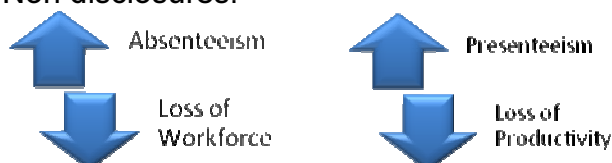
Professor Amanda Kirby – GP, Patron of the Dyspraxia Association in New Zealand, Advisor to the Dyspraxia Association in Ireland, Medical Advisor to the Dyspraxia Foundation in the UK, Founder of Movement Matters UK and Chief Executive of Do-IT Solutions Ltd

Background

- Around 10-15% of the population have Specific Learning Disabilities (SpLD)
- Reasonable adjustments around attitudes – particularly line managers
- Developmental Coordination Disorder – international term as DCD
- National organisations – Dyspraxia in the UK; Dyspraxia Foundation
- Individuals may vary in how their difficulties present
- Key areas of difficulties: fine motor skills, balance, organisation and time management, anxiety and depression (much more common with hidden impairments)
- Challenges faced: learning new tasks
- Someone with dyspraxia may present:
 - Working much longer
 - Avoiding advancement/promotion
 - Increased anxiety and sickness
 - Interaction with disability and mental health
- Challenges may result if there becomes a mismatch with demand and coping skills



- Non disclosures:



Suggested Adjustments

- Explain the task and the component parts
- Break down tasks and demonstrate it
- Giving adequate time and practice for learning new tasks
- Encourage accuracy first and speed up
- Avoid handwritten tasks (use templates, IT equipment, software)
- Organisational assistance
- Use mobile phone/diary/electronic system
- Do-IT Profiling Suite of Tools – screening tools and suggested reasonable adjustments
- Encourage people to go out and get fitter which will help with coordination

- Need to be proactive under Equality Act

Dyslexia
 Reading
 Writing
 Confusing
 Spelling
 Processing

DCD
 Writing
 Coordination

this is what causes
 people to lose
 jobs/impacts
 performance

Executive functioning
 Organisational
 Remember things in order
 Prioritisation
 Time/Slow
 Working memory

ADHD
 Concentration
 Prioritisation
 Time-blind' - poor
 concept of time passing

ASD
 Poor social
 interaction
 Theory of mind'
 Lack of concept
 about social distance
 Poor eye contact
 Social engagement

Dyscalculia
 Numbers

What stages can support be given?

- Application/registration processes
- Include SpLD on application process, and request assessments from previous workplace (Thames Valley Police)
- Website should be both text and voice enabled
- Timed out applications online are difficult
- Do you have a spell checker built in? Since you are checking if they can do the job, not just spelling

Reasonable Adjustments

- Organisation and time management
- Understanding and communicating
- Reading, spelling

- Writing
- Maths
- Physical fitness/driving
- Ginger – proofreading software (available for free) on www.boxofideas.org
- Response to intervention – more cost effective than just sending for documents

Getting Started

- Provide readily available information on the range of hidden impairments (not just physical)
- Have a named point of contact and publicise
- Reduce stigma

Possible Recruitment Adaptations:

- Avoiding handwritten forms to complete
- Stopping ‘time-out’ on website application forms
- Minimising text boxes, have ‘text to speech’ enabled, spell checker where possible
- Having accurate job descriptions to fit the job
- Follow up if disclosure made; give additional time
- Pre-interview protocol

Generic Principles

- Acronym dictionary helps the whole organisation
- Job description – write rules for people with ADHD
- Think about timed activities – is it realistic?

Induction/Training

- What’s the ‘real job’ – be explicit of the tasks expected and time taken
- Neurodiversity
- “None of us are simple individuals”

Best Practice

Hampshire Constabulary – Specific Learning Disabilities Project
Dyslexia Action Group

- Overlap of learning difficulties such as dyslexia, dyspraxia
- Increasing concerns that external ‘Access to Work’ assessments were not ‘fit for purpose’ – assessors look at the individual in their environment and not that of the candidate
- Lack of communication between internal departments
- “Postcode lottery”
- Hampshire Constabulary were vulnerable to challenge (employment tribunals)
- Screening tools: Quick Scan and Study Scan: carry out pre-employment

- Reasonable adjustments fitted into three categories (as laid out in the guidance provided by the British Dyslexia Association):
 - Personal Strategies (coping strategies), bespoke, carried out over a length of time, external person)
 - Assistive Technology (screen adjustments, stress aids)
 - Literacy and Numeracy (links with local educational establishments/organisations for courses); this can be done through self-referrals, management referrals, an assessor can be assigned to the individual
- Awareness training
- Process maps created
- Terms of reference
- Pilot

Aims & Objectives of Hampshire

- Provide consistent and credible support to staff bespoke to the needs of profession
- Joined up approach

Challenges

- “Corporacy”; processes and procedures (determining boundaries, advertising; what would the reasonable adjustments be; terms of reference
- Demand and resilience
- Assessor skill-base
- Communication (lack of ownership amongst departments i.e. IT)

How it progressed

- Pilot evaluation report
- Embedded as ‘business as normal’
- New assessors selected and trained (workplace assessors across all departments as volunteers)
- Department ‘buy-in’
- Staff awareness (get buy-in from line managers)
- Use of external providers and support (training days, e-learning, tutors, leadership courses)

Disability Assessment Group (DAG) Assessment

- What are the needs of individual
- Strengths of individual
- What would be needed (reasonable adjustments)
- Assessment then shared with line manager after getting individual’s consent

Outcomes

- Improved employee performance
- Significant increase in staff referrals
- Reasonable adjustments timely

- People Strategy and Equality Act compliance
- Strengthened relationships (internal and external)
- Cost savings (not just sending staff on training days)
- External funding opportunities maximised – ‘Access to Work’ as this can be reclaimed back
- Collaborative approach with external providers
- Significant support to other public sector organisations
- National acclaim

Best Practice at Transport for London (TfL)

- Dedicated staff member with a specialism in SpLD
- Specialist software for any staff member
- Weekly ‘English for dyslexic learners’ class
- An assessment service
- Regular awareness raising for any member of staff
- Advice on reasonable adjustments easily available to staff
- Recruitment team with embedded policies
- Dyslexia champions