

CReSTeD

**Council for the
Registration of Schools
Teaching Dyslexic pupils**



Information Pack

Do you understand string theory?

You do?

Could you read it in Greek?

You could?

Or are you like the vast majority of people who find string theory is Greek?

You are?

Welcome to the world of dyslexia and specific learning difficulties.

Sometimes even the most intelligent need extra help.

We all need help with one thing or another.

Don't we?

Welcome To CReSTeD

The Council for the Registration of Schools Teaching Dyslexic Pupils

When it comes to choosing a school for your child, location matters, sport and other facilities matter and the age range of the school matters.

But, for some, there will be one overriding requirement: **can this school cater for my child's specific needs?**

Of course, the specific need will vary: for some, it will be a first class Art Department, for others, an outstanding Music Department, but sometimes the need will be for excellent provision for Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) and that's where CReSTeD helps parents.

There was a time when the only SpLD was dyslexia. Now we know that children can have a variety of learning difficulties and hence the umbrella term. CReSTeD hasn't forgotten its roots. We still think of ourselves as a dyslexia charity. Dyslexia, however, rarely exists in isolation. We cannot visit a school to review its provision for dyslexia without looking at the whole picture.

Schools are visited every three years to ensure the provision for teaching a child with SpLD continues to meet our criteria.

CReSTeD a recognition going beyond a specialism.

CReSTeD would like to acknowledge the support of:

The British Dyslexia Association
 Dyslexia Action
 Dyslexia-SpLD Trust
 The Helen Arkell Dyslexia Centre

With thanks to:

Abingdon House School, London
 Bethany School, Kent
 Clayesmore School, Dorset
 Ellesmere College, Shropshire
 The Moat School, London
 Sunnydown School, Surrey

who gave their permission for images to be used in the production of the Information Pack



Why Join CReSTeD

It sets a standard

Parents and educational professionals know exactly what the criteria for becoming a CReSTeD Registered School are. They find you.

Because parents demand it

Parents are looking for choice and want the best for their child. The quality mark of being a CReSTeD registered school gives parents the assurances that they are looking for. Parents choose a school because it is CReSTeD Registered.

Because local authorities demand it

More and more local authorities rely on the CReSTeD register to inform their financial decisions about funding a placement for dyslexia.

Because Educational Psychologists demand it

Educational professionals look to the CReSTeD Register to inform their decisions and the advice they provide to parents.

Because you deserve it


Your investment in dyslexia and learning support in general should be shouted from the rooftops, the CReSTeD Register gives you that platform.

**Being CReSTeD registered can be the deciding factor
when it comes to choosing a school for a child with dyslexia.**




Understanding How We Work

Step 1: Get to know the categories




Below you will find details of the various categories, our term to describe the way we group schools. They are definitely not league tables but rather a way to help parents to understand the level of provision they can expect from a school. Reading through them helps both parents to find a school, and schools to understand which category is right for them.

Step 2: Get to know the criteria



We publish all the criteria to show you what we expect from all of our schools. Some elements of the criteria apply to all schools, whilst others are category specific. Taking a look through the criteria can help you to determine which category is best for you.

Step 3: The Registration Procedure



We try to make the whole experience relatively pain free. There is the inevitable paperwork which includes an application form. We also request some supporting documentation, although we only ask for paperwork which already exists for other purposes, Ofsted/ISI inspections for example.

We have included in the Information Pack a step by step guide to how the process works.

We don't want schools to be put off by an onerous application process but we need it to be thorough enough to reassure parents of the quality of the information they receive.

Step 1: Understand the Categories

Categories are used to explain the type of provision given by a school. One category should not be seen as “better” than another, but as a guide to the provision required by the student.

Category Names and Definitions

Dyslexia Specialist Provision Schools - DSP

The school is established primarily to teach pupils with dyslexia (SpLD). The curriculum and timetable are designed to meet specific needs in a holistic, co-ordinated manner with a significant number of teaching staff holding nationally recognised qualifications in teaching dyslexic pupils.

Dyslexia Unit - DU

The school has a designated Unit or Centre that provides specialist tuition, on a small group or individual basis, according to need. The Unit or Centre is an adequately resourced teaching area, under the management of a senior specialist teacher, who co-ordinates the work of other specialist teachers and ensures on-going liaison with all mainstream teachers. This senior SpLD teacher will probably have Head of Department status, will hold nationally recognised qualifications in teaching SpLD pupils and will certainly have significant input into the general school curriculum design and delivery.

Maintained Sector - MS

These are schools which support SpLD pupils to access the curriculum; where there is an effective system of identifying SpLD pupils; where there is a withdrawal system for individualised literacy support and there is positive on-going communication between mainstream, SEN staff and the SMT.





Specialist Provision Schools - SPS

The school is established to teach pupils with SpLD and other associated difficulties. The curriculum and timetable are designed to meet specific needs in a holistic, co-ordinated manner with a significant number of teaching staff holding nationally recognised specialist teaching qualifications.

Teaching Centres - TC

Centres providing specialist tuition for small groups or individuals, in an adequately resourced teaching area, managed by a teacher with BDA recognised qualifications (AMBDA or APC) **or equivalent**, who coordinates the work of other specialist dyslexia teachers.

Withdrawal System - WS

Schools where SpLD pupils are withdrawn from appropriately selected lessons, for specialist tuition from a teacher with a nationally recognised qualification in teaching SpLD pupils. There is on-going communication between mainstream and specialist teachers.

Step 2: Understand the Criteria

We begin by asking for evidence that the school really does understand Specific Learning Difficulties.

We know that a child with dyslexia, or any other SpLD can excel given the right support. This is the school's opportunity to show us.

CReSTeD would expect to see the following in all schools or centres:

1. The school or centre implements a thorough and rigorous process for identifying children with Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD)
2. The Senior Management Team and, in the case of schools, Governors, fully support the provision for SpLD pupils.
3. The impact of the provision for SpLD pupils is measured (a system to regularly monitor the provision for pupils and to assess their achievements).
4. There is an awareness by all members of staff of the necessity to adjust their teaching to meet the needs of SpLD pupils and this will be evident across the curriculum.
5. In Addition:
 5. 1. Resources for learning appropriate to the level of need.
 5. 2. IT provision relevant and of high quality, including up-to-date and regularly used programs for SpLD pupils.
 5. 3. Access arrangements for all examinations sought as needed. Assessments for access arrangements must comply with Joint Council for Qualifications guidelines².
 5. 4. Specific structured, cumulative and multi-sensory teaching materials to address literacy with SpLD pupils.
 5. 5. An annual report for parents on the progress of pupils, who exhibit SpLD.

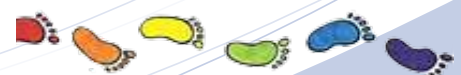
In addition to the above the following criteria relate to the various categories:



Next we ask for information about how the school provides support, in this way we start to identify the level of provision.

By categorising schools in this way parents can more easily recognise which category is best for their child.

6. Specific to the Category of School or Centre: -	SPS	DSP	DU	WS	MS	TC
6. 1. The school/centre is established primarily to teach pupils with SpLD which may include other difficulties.	√					√
6. 2. The school is established primarily to teach pupils with SpLD.		√				
6. 3. A Unit or Centre providing specialist tuition on a small group or individual basis, within the school environment.			√			
6. 4. A Unit or Centre providing specialist tuition on a small group or individual basis, independent of the school environment.						√
6. 5. The Unit or Centre is adequately resourced, under the management of a senior specialist teacher, who co-ordinates the work of other specialist teachers.			√			√
6. 6. The Head of Unit will have Head of Department status, and must have an input into curriculum design and delivery.			√			
6. 7. The Centre is organised by a qualified teacher who designs both content and delivery of teaching materials and lessons.						√
6. 8. There is provision for individualised lessons on a withdrawal basis, support staff communicate with mainstream teachers regarding the SpLD pupils.				√	√	
6. 9. Assessment for admission to the school/centre should include a report from an Educational Psychologist or a Specialist Teacher who holds an Assessment Practising Certificate.	√	√				√



Finally, we want to know a little more about the teachers within the school. How qualified are they? How many are there with specialist knowledge?

We strongly encourage teachers to gain the additional qualifications to support children with Specific Learning Difficulties whilst trying to recognise that experience counts too.

7. Qualifications of Teaching Staff: -	SPS	DSP	DU	WS	MS	TC
7. 1. The Head of Learning Support (or equivalent) should be a qualified teacher holding a nationally recognised qualification for the teaching of pupils with SpLD. Exceptions may only be allowed after special reference to the Council.	√	√	√			√
7. 2. The teacher in charge should hold a nationally recognised qualification for the teaching of SpLD pupils. Exceptions may only be allowed after special reference to the Council.						√
7. 3. As a minimum, all English teachers and teachers of literacy skills will have nationally recognised qualifications in the teaching of SpLD pupils. In exceptional circumstances the consultant may recommend to Council that an experienced teacher or a teacher undergoing training satisfies this criterion.	√	√				
7. 4. The majority of lessons in the Unit or Centre to be taught by those having nationally recognised qualifications in the teaching of SpLD pupils. In exceptional circumstances the consultant may recommend to Council that an experienced teacher undergoing training satisfies this criterion.			√			√
7. 5. The majority of teachers providing literacy support hold a nationally recognised qualification in the teaching of SpLD pupils. In exceptional circumstances the consultant may recommend to Council that an experienced teacher undergoing training satisfies this criterion.				√		
7. 6. There is either an SpLD specialist teacher in the school or the school uses specialist support and advice as needed.					√	
7. 7. The teaching assistants responsible for in-class support have received specific training in SpLD and will continue to receive regular Continuous Professional Development in supporting SpLD pupils.					√	



CReSTeD expects schools to offer the best support any child could hope to receive. To do this we believe that teachers should be qualified but what do we mean by this?

Teachers

For the purposes of CReSTeD a 'teacher' is a person who delivers lessons. If a Learning Support Assistant is charged with delivering lessons (1:1 or groups) then this person will be regarded as a teacher by CReSTeD.

Qualifications

We would always recommend that teachers undertake extra training and, whenever possible, we would hope that they would gain both the British Dyslexia Association's "Approved Teacher Status" (ATS) and, perhaps, eventually full BDA Associate Membership (AMBDA).

However, we recognise that this isn't always possible and some teachers may have gone down an equal but alternate route. For example, they may have gained an MA in SpLD/SEN. We think the work done by the BDA, to create its programme, provides an appropriate level of experience and training, so we decided to use their guidelines to influence ours.

If a teacher can demonstrate that their experience and training is at least equal to the BDA's Approved Teacher Status, then they are qualified in the eyes of CReSTeD.

Access Arrangements

Schools should also be able to assess students for access arrangements. Some schools will do this by having appropriately qualified teachers, others will employ independent Educational Psychologists. The model varies. CReSTeD does not specify how a school should assess its pupils, only that it does. Schools are guided in this by the Joint Council for Qualifications. We would expect schools to use the JCQ guidelines as a minimum standard.

NB

The Joint Council for Qualifications guidelines for access arrangements can be downloaded here: <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration>

Please refer to Chapter 7, paragraph 7.3 of the JCQ booklet 'Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments' for the current requirements.



Step 3: The Registration Procedure

A step by step guide such as this is, by necessity, quite structured. However, we do our utmost to make sure that the whole process is constructive and as informal as possible. The intention is to ensure that schools, which meet our criteria, feel comfortable throughout the process and are not deterred from applying by an over officious process.

Before the visit

1. Request or download an application form (www.crested.org.uk/docs).

There may be times when schools are still unsure about their appropriate category, in which case, a “master” copy of the application form is available. This version of the form includes questions relating to all categories and a table to cross-reference responses to the criteria. By completing this form schools may find they can then narrow down the appropriate category. Further help can be obtained by contacting the CReSTeD Administrator.

2. Gather together the documentation needed in support of your application, paper copies or digital copies are accepted.



We ask for slightly different information from schools and centres:

Supporting documentation for schools:

- ✎ Prospectus, including staff list (if this does not clearly show which teachers teach English, then please supply this as a separate item).
- ✎ Recent inspection reports (Ofsted, Estyn, ISI) where applicable.
- ✎ Fees and compulsory extras for SpLD pupils (if applicable).
- ✎ Staff Handbook - preferably in digital format as these documents tend to be very large. Include at least: policy for SEN/SpLD, Support from Senior Management Team and Governors (where applicable),
 - ✎ Often policies are quite brief, in such circumstances the application form has room to include them.
- ✎ Two examples of provision maps/ IEP/ILPs (or equivalent) or two brief case studies of SpLD children in the school.
- ✎ SEN Development Plan (or equivalent).
- ✎ Timetables of teachers or teaching assistants for SpLD, but not the whole school/all staff.
- ✎ List of the names of all known SpLD pupils in the school.

Supporting documentation for centres:

- ✎ Marketing materials including staff list.
- ✎ Quality assurance documentation.
- ✎ Details of fees.
- ✎ Staff Handbook - preferably in digital format as these documents tend to be very large. Include at least: policies for Admissions, Identification and Assessment and any other documents the centre considers relevant.
 - ✎ Often policies are quite brief, in such circumstances the application form has room to include them.
- ✎ Two examples of provision maps/ IEP/ILPs (or equivalent) or two brief case studies of SpLD children in the school.
- ✎ Safeguarding Policy (or equivalent).
- ✎ Daily Timetable.
- ✎ List of the names of all pupils currently taught in centre.



3. Fill in the application form.
4. Return the documentation. A copy of the form signed by the Headteacher/Principal should be returned along with all the supporting documents.
 - ✎ A consultant is allocated once all the documentation is received. Documentation can be returned either as hard copies or digitally. However, it is essential that we receive a copy of the completed application form digitally. The consultants will need to add their comments to the form.
5. CReSTeD will assign a consultant who will contact you to arrange a date for the visit.

The Consultant

All our consultants are extremely well qualified in their field. Schools are allocated a consultant (two for schools applying to join the Register in categories DSP, SPS or DU), to conduct the visit and complete the report.

6. CReSTeD will:
 - ✎ Invoice for the cost of the visit.
 - ✎ Supply a copy of the CV for the consultant.
 - ✎ Supply a draft letter for the school to send to parents regarding the forthcoming visit requesting permission for the consultant to speak to some of them to obtain their impressions of the school.
 - ✎ CReSTeD does not insist that schools use this letter, only that parents of all children in the school with one or more SpLD are contacted to inform them of the visit and to obtain the necessary permissions.





The Visit

7. The Consultant will:

- ✎ Contact the school to arrange a mutually convenient date for the visit.
- ✎ Liaise with the school to organise details of the visit (this will include obtaining the names and contact details of 12 parents. The consultant will need to contact at least 6 as part of the review process).

8. During the visit the consultant will:

- ✎ Observe lessons.
- ✎ Observe support facilities.
- ✎ Speak to at least six SpLD pupils of different age groups. This part of the visit should take place either in the library or over lunch, out of a formal setting, with other people present but not included in the conversation.
 - ✎ Each consultant has his or her own way of conducting the visit. However, all of them have vast experience and schools may want to include time to discuss any questions they might have.



9. Documents to have available:

- ✎ Results of tests and assessments of pupils with SpLD after admission for the last 3 years, including Reading Ages, Spelling Scores, etc.
- ✎ Certificates of specialist qualifications for all teachers of SpLD. Alternatively a document signed by the Principal certifying that the documents have been seen.
- ✎ Department policy documents for Mathematics and English.
- ✎ Consultants may ask for other documents to be available on the day of the visit. This will be communicated to the school/centre in advance. An obvious example would be lessons plans.
 - ✎ Most schools/centres very kindly make a room available for the consultant(s). Where this is not possible, suitable arrangements need to be made.



10. Schools/centres are asked to allow time, at the end of the day, for the consultant to give a review of their initial findings to the Headteacher/Principal.

Post Visit

11. Application form completed by consultant.
12. Application form returned for final approval. Schools/centres are encouraged to discuss the completed form with the consultant.
13. Return a signed copy of the completed application form to the CReSTeD Administrator.
14. The Administrator will draft the report for publication, creating a report summary and removing any data of a confidential nature. The summary will form the basis of the entry into the Register. The report will be returned to the school/centre for approval.
15. Report reviewed by Pre-Registration Committee.
 -  The committee meets 3 times a year, currently the first week of March, June and November. Completed reports are required at least one week in advance of the meeting.
16. Report seen by full CReSTeD Council.
17. Certificate issued as appropriate.
18. Invoice for (apportioned) Annual Registration Fee.
19. Details included in the Register.
 -  Once a school or centre is CReSTeD registered, it is entitled to use the CReSTeD logo on its letterhead, prospectus and other marketing materials.

Re-Registration and Review Visits

The main reason for CReSTeD's success is our aim to set and improve standards for the provision for pupils with one or more SpLD. Schools are asked to re-apply every third year to help us to ensure the standards in school are maintained. The procedure for every visit is identical, be it the first or one of many over a long relationship with a school.

Only schools and centres which maintain or improve the standard of provision will remain on the Register.

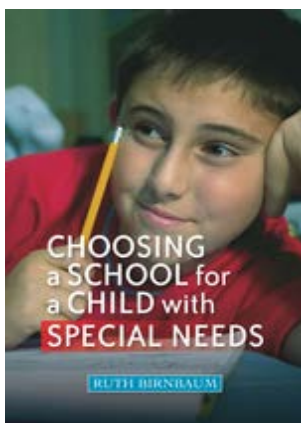
Annual Registration Fee payable by 1st September in each subsequent year of registration, the fee includes the cost of the re-registration visits.

What Do Parents Look For To In A School?

Of course this varies a great deal, often parents who approach CReSTeD are not only asking which school is most appropriate for their child but what should I be looking for in a school.

We suggest parents use our criteria as the basis for their questions, after all they are the questions we ask, we also suggest they read our "Parents Checklist", it isn't really 'ours' at all, but an extract from a book written by Ruth Birnbaum and reproduced with permission of both the author and the publishers.

We think it covers everything a parent needs to think about.







Birnbaum (2010) *Choosing a School for a Child with Special Needs: Questions to ask when considering a school for a dyslexic child*

Jessica Kingsley Publishers, London and Philadelphia.

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Questions to ask when considering a school for a dyslexic (SpLD) pupil

1. How many dyslexic children are there in the school? Does the school undertake screening for specific learning difficulties and, if so, what was the result?
2. How many of these children are at School Action, School Action Plus and have Statements?
3. How many teachers, specially trained to work with SpLD children, are on the staff and, specifically, what are their qualifications, e.g. are they BDA Approved? Do the teachers hold an SpLD diploma or advanced (Level 7) certificate (such as OCR with AMBDA)?
4. If there are no specialists on staff, how does the school access the Local Authority services for dyslexia and how frequently do the dyslexia teachers attend the school?
5. The current aims of PATOSS are to ensure that there is:
 -  awareness and foundation training for all teachers and support staff
 -  a lead teacher (certificate level) in every primary school
 -  two teachers in every secondary school or pupil referral unit
 -  one expert teacher (diploma level) to be shared between a small group of schools.
6. How do non-specialist teachers address the needs of dyslexic children in their classes, and what specific training have the non-specialist teachers had during the last year?
7. What are the arrangements for catch-up in training for absent staff or teachers who join during the year? Training of whole-school awareness is likely to take up to one day.
8. How is special teaching delivered, e.g. in class, withdrawal, individually or in small groups?



9. Does the teaching take place in a department and, if so, are there any specific resources or equipment available and how does the school address the fact that the child has to leave other lessons to attend a different department or unit?
10. What specific intervention programmes are carried out in school? (These may include specific programmes such as Alpha to Omega, AcceleRead/ AcceleWrite, Hickey, etc., or software programmes such as WordShark/ NumberShark, Smart Phonics 1, 2, 3 and Clicker Phonics.) There are many resources available. It is possible to do some research using the internet, which does have critical evaluations of some programmes. There is no 'one size fits all' and the SpLD specialist and/ or psychologist should advise on what is suitable for an individual child.
11. Do these specific intervention programmes focus on both literacy and numeracy and do they use structured multi-sensory teaching?
12. Who supervises the programmes? (this is particularly important if the programmes are predominantly carried out by learning support assistants rather than specialist teachers)
13. What access to and training for ICT do dyslexic children have over and beyond the usual facilities available for all children?
14. How rigid is the school in their policies with regard to following a foreign language or minimising GCSEs which a typical dyslexic child may take?
15. In addition to support in subjects such as English, is there further additional support available for other subjects? Does the school have a Quality Mark registration from the BDA for a dyslexia-friendly school? Is the school registered with CReSTeD?
16. Ask to see how homework is given and supported (this will be particularly important if the child has difficulty in copying things down at speed from the whiteboard into a homework diary) and also ask to see a typical Individual Education Plan (IEP) for a dyslexic child at the school.
17. Dyslexic children often have difficulties with self-esteem, confidence, organisational skills etc. How does the school address these aspects? Does the school feel that the resources, which are currently available, are adequate and if not, what else is required and where could these be obtained?
18. Is inclusion seen as a priority area and if so, how will the dyslexic child be included in all areas of the curriculum?
19. Who would a parent contact, in the first instance, to discuss any concerns?
20. What adjustments are currently being made for dyslexic children in the school and how is the curriculum being differentiated? It is always helpful to ask for specific examples, perhaps by identifying children (not by name) who are currently in the school. If a child has slow or poor written skills, what time allowances are made by teachers during lessons, homework and in examinations?
21. What further training is needed by the school and is this already organised?
22. How does the school ensure that there are adequate opportunities for dyslexic children to work with other children with similar cognitive ability or with an appropriate level of cognitive challenge, despite their literacy or numeracy problems?
23. What other evidence can the school provide to demonstrate that their inclusive practice is being effective and having a positive impact?
24. How does the marking and assessment policy ensure that the child is assessed on the basis of their knowledge (rather than poor spelling)?
25. How does the school measure its effectiveness with dyslexic children? Is there qualitative evidence, e.g. increase in self-esteem and also, quantitative evidence, e.g. reaching expectations through the different key stages?

Notes

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Gives Choice To Parents

**Our aim is to help parents, and those who advise them,
to choose schools for dyslexic children.**

**We maintain a register of schools which meet our criteria
for the teaching of pupils with
Specific Learning Difficulties.**

**Our work is supported by:-
British Dyslexia Association,
Dyslexia Action,
Dyslexia Spld Trust
&
Helen Arkell Dyslexia Centre.**

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