



## Council for the Registration of Schools Teaching Dyslexic Pupils

### Nunnykirk Centre for Dyslexia

### Registration – Category DSP

1. *Date of visit:* 20/11/2013
2. *Name of Consultant(s):* R A McCarthy

School Contact Details	Location/ status	Student Details	Special Needs	Assoc'/ exams
<b>Nunnykirk Centre for Dyslexia</b> Netherwitton Morpeth Northumberland NE61 4PB Tel: 01670 772685 Fax: 01670 772434 Email: <a href="mailto:secretary@nunnykirk.co.uk">secretary@nunnykirk.co.uk</a> Web: <a href="http://www.nunnykirk.co.uk">www.nunnykirk.co.uk</a>	Rural	24 boys 4 girls	Dysc Dysl Dysp	NASS NMSS
	Ind Wk Bdg/Day	Ages: 9-18		GCSE CoA
Comments: "Care, guidance and support are outstanding". Ofsted 2011				

*Please note:*

- *Throughout this report details that might be used to identify individuals have been removed to protect their privacy.*
- *The reports have been prepared for each category from a master form; some reports may have numbers that appear to be missing. This is because that particular question is not relevant to the category of school, a complete list of the criteria as it applies to each category can be found on our website.*

Old Post House,  
Castle St,  
Whittington,  
Shropshire,  
SY11 4DF  
Tel: (free phone) 0845 601 5013  
Or 01691 655783  
Website: [www.crested.org.uk](http://www.crested.org.uk)  
Email: [admin@cresteds.org.uk](mailto:admin@cresteds.org.uk)



3. a) **Name and address of school:**

Nunnykirk Centre for Dyslexia  
Netherwitton  
Morpeth  
Northumberland  
NE61 4PB

Tel: 01670 772685  
Fax: 01670 772 434  
Email: secretary@nunnykirk.co.uk  
Web: www.nunnykirk.co.uk

b) **Name and qualifications of Head/Principal, with title used:**

Name: Mrs Carol Hodgson  
Title (e.g. Principal): Headteacher  
Qualifications: BA(Hons), PGCE, Adv.Cert.Further Professional Studies (SpLD/Dyslexia) NPQH  
BDA Approved Teacher  
Certificate of Psychometric Testing, Assessment & Access Arrangements  
Awarding body: Birmingham Polytechnic, Bangor University, National College for School Leadership

*Consultant's comments: Mrs Hodgson, as well as being well qualified, is also very experienced in the field of specific learning difficulties.*

c) **Name and qualifications of Head of Specialist Provision or Senior SpLD teacher:**

Name: Mrs Carol Hodgson  
Title (e.g. SENCO): As Above  
Qualifications:  
Awarding body:

*Consultant's comments: It is very much to Nunnykirk's advantage to have Mrs Hodgson fulfilling the roles of head and SENCO and she deals supremely well with the workload she carries.*



## Background and General Information

4. a) **Recent inspections:** Ofsted June 2011  
Ofsted Welfare inspection for residential special school November 2012

*Consultant's comments: Ofsted judged the overall effectiveness as good, with outcomes for residential pupils judged to be outstanding. 'Their examination results, and other measures of progress, clearly demonstrate the positive impact that living here has on educational outcomes'.*

Independent  
Schools  
only

- b) **Current membership (e.g. HMC, ISA etc.):** NASS (National Association of Special Schools, Corporate Member of BDA

*Consultant's comments: Appropriate memberships.*

- c) **Department of Education Registration Number:** 9297023

- d) **Numbers, sex and age of pupils:**

		Total	SpLD (Dyslexia)	Accepted age range
Day:	Boys:	12	12	9-18
	Girls:	4	4	9-18
Boarding:	Boys:	12	12	9-18
	Girls:	-	-	9-18
<b>Overall total:</b>		28	28	

*Consultant's comments: Given that pupils tend to join Nunnykirk throughout the year, this number is not definitive and had already gone up to 30 by the time of the visit*

- e) **Class sizes – mainstream:** n/a

*Consultant's comments:*

- f) **Class sizes - special needs:** Maximum of 8 in a group. English lesson split further for intensive literacy work (Special English)

*Consultant's comments: It is a great advantage to pupils to be able to access this level of attention from teachers. Pupils are genuinely treated as individuals and are well aware of the opportunities from which they are benefiting.*

DSP4  
SPS5

- g) **Aims and philosophy of the whole school:** We aim to provide a unique environment where children with specific learning difficulties are enabled to access the curriculum, benefit from specialist remedial teaching across the curriculum and progress both academically, socially and morally. We provide a high level of support both academically and pastorally to enable pupils to build up self confidence and self worth and to discover their own strengths and potential.

We aim to enable pupils with specific learning difficulties to re-enter the education system/world of work with the sense of self worth, confidence and skills needed to succeed.



*Consultant's comments: The pupils are impressive in the way they interact with each other and with teachers and visitors. There is a respectful but relaxed relationship between pupils and teachers.*

- h) ***For completion by consultants only: Pastoral care arrangements, as relevant to SpLD (dyslexia) students, based on Ofsted/ISI report:***  
*Pastoral care arrangements are as caring on an individual basis as curricular arrangements. The Ofsted visit of June 2011 commented that 'A strong, caring and positive ethos pervades the school...pupils blossom due to the care, guidance and support the school provides'.*



## Staffing and Staff Development

DSP, SPS,  
DU 7;  
SC, WS 18;  
MS 21

5. a) **Qualifications, date, awarding body and experience of all learning support staff:**

Details of staff qualifications were provided at the time of application, names and specifics are not published to protect the identity of individuals.

*Consultant's comments: Qualifications are appropriate and experience is wide.*

DSP, SPS 8

- c) **Do all English teachers and teachers of literacy skills have nationally recognised qualifications in the teaching of Dyslexic (SpLD) children (except A level English)?** Mrs Gorbould is currently in training on a Dyslexia Action Course.

*Consultant's comments: All English teachers fulfil CReSTeD criteria.*

DSP, SPS 9

- d) **For completion by consultants only: Do all members of staff demonstrate the ability to meet the needs of dyslexic (SpLD) pupils within their departments?** Fully



## Policy and Philosophy with Regard to Dyslexic (SpLD) Pupils

Criteria 1  
& 2

6. a) **Policy statement with regard to dyslexic (SpLD) pupils including:**
- **Identification and assessment**
  - **Support for policy from Senior Management Team**
  - **Support for policy from governors**
1. To provide a safe caring environment where everyone matters. 2. To address an individual's needs. 3. To build self confidence and self esteem. 4. To remediate their specific difficulties. 5. To prepare pupils for college, courses and work when they leave Nunnykirk. 6. To try to develop an open and understanding attitude to all members of society. 7. To reach their potential. 8. To be able to enjoy life. All aims in this policy are supported by all teachers and governors of the school. Identification and assessment of need is made prior to pupils entering the school.

*Consultant's comments: Assessment of need is inevitably thorough as many parents have struggled through tribunals in order to gain a place at Nunnykirk for their children.*

*Governors are currently very much involved in the running of the school and the fact that there are three governors who have, or have had, children at the school ensures a good working knowledge of how Nunnykirk works.*

*There is useful careers guidance and advice provided by teachers as well as visiting professionals.*

- b) **Admission policy / selection criteria:** Pupils, who are of average intelligence; with SpLD/Dyslexia identified as one of their primary areas of difficulty; are accepted after consideration of a Psychologist's report and/or Statement of Special Need and an interview with the Headteacher. Pupils are encouraged to participate in a 'taster day' before a decision is made as to whether the provision is right for them. Behavioural difficulties associated with their dyslexia will be taken into consideration.

*Consultant's comments: Careful thought is given to whether Nunnykirk is the right place for a pupil and whether the pupil will fit well into the school. Pupils who arrive with behavioural difficulties generally become valued members of the community. Behaviour is very carefully monitored and pupils were impressively polite on the day of the CReSTeD visit.*

Criterion 3

- c) **Give specific examples of the whole school response to dyslexia (SpLD):**

There is a highly structured school day and evening including organised activities/visits, both educational and recreational. The timetable reflects as much as possible the need for a balance between academic and practical lessons. All pupils have a reading period at the same time each day for regular reinforcement of reading skills.

Homework diaries and a daily Form Period at the beginning and end of the day help with organisational difficulties. All pupils have IEPs and all staff are aware of these. There is a central bank kept in the Staff Room as well as individual results of baseline testing. New staff in all subjects are required to undertake a recognised qualification in the teaching of children with dyslexia and an induction programme is undertaken with the Headteacher or senior member of staff.



For GCSE exams there is a balance between 'academic' and 'practical' exams so that a variety of individual strengths can be catered for. There is regular Inset for Staff.

In addition:

- Cream paper is used throughout the school
- ACE dictionaries are in all classrooms
- Water is freely available for consumption during lessons
- Diet
- ICT – laptops are widely available as well as a variety of PCs around the school in addition to the ICT suite.
- Pupils are given opportunities for physical exercise before the beginning of school if they want to participate.

*Consultant's comments: the emphasis at Nunnykirk is very much on individual need and teachers know their pupils very well. The physical environment of the school is also important. The rural setting and the opportunities for outdoor pursuits are important in providing the ethos of the school.*



## School Organisation

7. a) **How is the week organised?**

The school has 35 lessons a week with all but the 30 minute daily Reading Period lasting 45 minutes. The timetable, particularly lower down the school is designed to give pupils 'breaks' from academic subjects wherever possible so that there is a balance between academic and practical and the pupils are able to take 'breathers' – staff try to make as much use of the environment as possible when teaching so that there are plenty of opportunities for pupils to be outside in the fresh air. All pupils are able to spend time with the animals in Rural Studies lessons. There are a wide range of hobbies available after school which are open to day pupils as well as boarders. Boarding is weekly.

*Consultant's comments: Many pupils commented on how much their reading had improved since being at Nunnykirk and: the daily reading session is undoubtedly an important factor in this gain. The balance between activities and lessons is also evidence of the degree of care that is taken to provide the right environment for Nunnykirk's pupils.*

b) **Details of arrangements for dyslexic (SpLD) pupils, including prep / homework:**

The whole school approach is designed to facilitate the learning and maximise the potential of dyslexic students. A consistent approach is taken by all staff to meeting the needs of individuals in the structured daily programme.

Daily staff meetings ensure good communication with regard to individual pupils and their specific needs. The amount of prep given is age dependent. Form Tutors help with pupils' organisation and teaching staff ensure prep books are up to date.

Prep is designed to be completed independently as much as possible but it is recognised pupils may need help with reading and recording. Teaching staff are available in the evenings if support is needed.

*Consultant's comments: It is not only teachers who are involved in supporting pupils' prep assignments. 'Matey'(Matron) is very much part of the team and helps pupils to organise their time as well as make sure that prep gets back to the right place.*

*Teachers here go above and beyond to give pupils opportunities to succeed in what they are doing and they give their time and expertise unstintingly.*



## Identification and Assessment

Criterion 1  
DSP &  
SPS 6

8. a) **Give details of how you identify pupils in your school who have or are at risk of dyslexia (SpLD), and when this takes place in the admissions process:**

Pupils usually enter the school with their dyslexia identified by either an Educational Psychologist or through a Statement of Educational Needs.

*Consultant's comments: Should an assessment or identification be necessary (and this would not normally be the case), expert staff at Nunnykirk would be able to provide it.*

- b) **Give details of what action you take when children are identified as at risk of dyslexia (SpLD) from screening:**

*Consultant's comments: Pupils arrive at Nunnykirk with full identification of need and these needs are fully taken into account.*

- c) **Give details of how children in your school can access a full assessment for dyslexia (SpLD):**

They generally have had one of these before entry to the school - but if necessary we have contacts with a local Educational Psychologist.

*Consultant's comments: As well as contacts with Occupational Therapists, Speech and Language Therapists and Careers Advisers.*



## Teaching and Learning

Criterion 3,  
MS & DU  
12; MS &  
SC 17; MS  
& WS 19

9. a) **Lesson preparation and delivery to meet the needs of dyslexic (SpLD) pupils for:**
- **Curriculum subjects**
  - **Literacy support**
  - Individual subjects are developed by staff to follow the framework of the National Curriculum
  - Staff experience and strengths are used to develop a variety of teaching strategies and resources tailored to the needs of the pupils.
  - Termly cross curricular planning meetings reinforce staff collaboration and pupil learning.
  - All pupils are timetabled for 2 sessions a week of Special English in groups of varying sizes dependent upon appropriate groupings.
  - Teaching and assessment is monitored by the Senior Management

*Consultant's comments: Pupils are clearly motivated to learn in their lessons and are relaxed and confident enough to talk to a CRESTeD visitor within lessons. Their enthusiasm as well as the enthusiasm of their teachers is impressive as is the humour that is shared and the supportive relationships between pupils. Lessons observed were building on previous learning and enabled pupils to progress from a firm knowledge basis. A photography lesson was so interesting, and pupils so keen to talk about their work, that the carefully planned timetable for the day was severely interrupted.*

- b) **Use of IEP's:** IEPs are produced 6 monthly in conjunction with parents and pupils. Their production is related to the 6 monthly testing cycle. Reading IEPs are distributed to individual teachers to inform Reading Period Word. Copies of reading, spelling, writing and social IEPs are kept in a central file in the staff room as well as in pupil's individual files. All staff are required to use them to inform teaching.

*Consultant's comments: IEPs are detailed and useful working documents.*

- c) **Records and record keeping:** Pupil records are kept in the school office – all information on individuals is to be found there. The school also uses Phoenix school information management system. Records of testing, IEPs and annual reviews and progress are kept on a separate hard drive.

Tests used to monitor progress:

- Yearly in February – Macmillan Graded Word Reading Test
- Yearly in June – WRAT 3 Single Word Reading and Spelling New Reading Analysis
- For Access Arrangements – WRAT 4 Word Reading and Sentence Comprehension, Wordchains and Patoss Handwriting speed test.
- Initial Baseline Testing – LASS + above
- Maths Testing – NFER Nelson

*Consultant's comments: Records are extremely well kept. Annual Review documentation here provides challenges as each Local Authority has its own set of forms and pupils come from a wide range of LAs. All teachers teaching a pupil have input into these documents and they are impressively detailed.*

Criterion 3

- d) **For comment by consultants only: Two case studies of dyslexic pupils (proforma provided to Heads for use if required) All pupils at Nunykirk are fully documented.**



Criterion 3

e) **Impact of provision – assessment summary:**

<b>A-Level (GCE) and VCE</b>	No. of pupils Years 12 & 13	Number entered	Percentage grade A-E	Average point score per pupil	Average point score per exam entry
Whole School	2	2	100	254	254
Dyslexic (SpLD) Pupils	2	2	100		

<b>GCSE</b>	No. of pupils inc'd in the Year 11 timetable, regardless of age	Percentage A* - C	Percentage 5+ A* - C	Percentage 5+ A* - G
Whole School	5	80	0	80
Dyslexic (SpLD) Pupils	5	80	0	80

- f) **Any other relevant information, e.g. details of any other examinations taken, Reading and Spelling age assessments:** Annual testing for reading and spelling - results in February (Reading) and June (Reading and Spelling).

Entry Level Qualifications taken in English and Science when necessary.  
Adult Literacy  
Functional Skills ICT

*Consultant's comments: When such small numbers of pupils are involved, one pupil's success or failure in an exam can change the statistics significantly. Nunnykirk is rightly proud of the examination successes achieved by their pupils but it is often their success in becoming increasingly confident and engaged that is the important achievement.*

- g) **Details of access (special examination) arrangements requested and made for dyslexic (SpLD) pupils:** Reader, extra time, amanuensis, transcript and word processing applied for where necessary

*Consultant's comments: Access Arrangements are appropriately provided.*

- h) *For completion by consultants only: **Dyslexic (SpLD) pupils' responses regarding their school and teachers:***

*A group of 8 volunteers (a mix of day pupils and boarders) gathered for lunch. They were very proud of their school and felt that it was thanks to Nunnykirk that they had made progress. 'I couldn't read before I came here, and now I can'.*

*When asked which aspect of the school they liked, the answer was, 'Everything!'*

*They were very appreciative of the outdoor opportunities (go-karting, climbing, CCF, swimming, rural studies).*

*They struggled to name a favourite lesson as they felt all were good and they knew immediately who to go to should they need advice regarding treatment by other pupils (a chorus of 'Mr Nics!'- Mr Nicholson- was heard). As Mr Nicholson is Deputy Head (Pastoral) this is entirely*



*appropriate. Older pupils felt that they now have good possibilities for the future and a younger pupil now feels that he will be able to move on to a school nearer his home to do A Levels. He felt that without Nunnykirk's support he would not have been able to do this. The wider range of A Levels on offer in a larger school appealed to him.*

*Although no girls had volunteered for this lunch time meeting (there are currently 4 in school) I was able to talk informally to a couple of them on the way to and from lessons and they were equally happy with Nunnykirk. All pupils particularly enjoyed the food at Nunnykirk (unusual to experience such consensus!) and I could only agree with them. In fact healthy diet is taken seriously at Nunnykirk and animal husbandry is part of the curriculum up to year 9.*

*The way in which pupils listened to each other and helped each other out when talking about the school was noticeable.*



## Facilities and Equipment for Access to Teaching of Dyslexic (SpLD) Pupils

10. a) **General resources for teaching dyslexic (SpLD) pupils:**

- Laptops with speech programmes
- ACE dictionaries
- Reading Scheme
- Software
- Cream Paper
- Transparencies
- Dictaphones
- Spell Checkers
- Camcorders
- Spelling, reading and maths learning programmes for PCs
- Broadband

*Consultant's comments: Resources are good, but the important resources that are not on this list are the expertise and care of the teachers and the walled garden that provides a respite from lessons, should one be needed..*

- b) **Library:** The library also functions as a meeting room for staff and reviews. Soft cushions and easy chairs are intended to make the room more welcoming for reluctant readers. The books are arranged in subject areas around the room. Subject teachers are encouraged to buy relevant reference books for their subjects through the school secretary. In addition pupils are encouraged to ask for specific books they would like to read. The library is used in the evenings as a room for playing Warhammer as well as a quiet place to either read or talk.

*Consultant's comments: The library is delightful space and a good range of books is available.*

- c) **ICT:** Students have very good access to ICT. There is an ICT suite with a sophisticated range of computers and printers, 4 of which are connected to the internet. There are also varying numbers of computers and printers around the classrooms. In addition pupils have access to a large supply of laptops fitted with software packages to help with spelling, reading and editing work. The Science room has an interactive whiteboard and one is planned for the Junior classroom. Pupils are encouraged to use word processing to help with the presentation and production of written work. Every pupil up to Year 9 is timetabled for at least one ICT lesson per week.

*Consultant's comments: ICT is used to advantage throughout lessons and software is appropriate. The packages used in photography are impressive.*



## Statement of Special Educational Needs

11. a) **School policy:** Statements highlighting dyslexia as one of the primary difficulties are accepted. Annual reviews are held for all pupils regardless of whether they have a Statement. Our Independent Careers representative is invited to reviews from Year 9 and representatives from LEAs where appropriate.

*Consultant's comments: It is very good practice to provide annual reviews for all pupils. Care is taken to support parents at annual review meetings, as Nunnykirk is aware that many parents are also dyslexic.*

Independent  
Schools  
only

- b) **Types of stated needs accepted:** Alongside the primary difficulty of dyslexia – dyspraxia and dyscalculia.

*Consultant's comments: There are also pupils who have overlapping social difficulties and are on the autistic spectrum.*

- c) **Number of stated pupils:** 21

*Consultant's comments: Given the individual level of care provided by Nunnykirk it is no surprise that the percentage of pupils with statements is so high.*

## Parents' Feelings About the School, in Particular, its Response to Dyslexic (SpLD) Pupils

Independent  
Schools  
only

12. Schools should provide, with the documentation, a list of the names of all known dyslexic (SpLD) pupils in the school. From this the consultant will select 12 names and schools will be asked to contact the parents (CReSTeD will provide an explanatory letter) for their permission to give their phone numbers to the consultant. The consultant will then contact 6 of these parents before the visit takes place to discuss their feelings about the school.

*For completion by consultants only: **Parent Contacts:** Seven parents were contacted and comments were overwhelmingly positive. 'He's happy there- he suffered terribly in mainstream school. He's now confident, positive, back to normal'*

*There were many similar comments: 'I've never seen him so happy. He has a good future ahead of him now'.*

*Many of the parents who were contacted had battled Local Authorities in order to have their children placed at Nunnykirk and felt great relief that they had succeeded. All would or had, recommended the school to other parents.*

*Two parents whose children are on the autistic spectrum felt that it would be advantageous for a teacher or teachers to have a qualification in this area.*

*Parents were happy with the degree of contact from the school and felt that they could speak to teachers or the Head whenever they needed to. One parent mentioned that she was contacted weekly by the boarding house.*

*Another said that if you leave a message 'they get back to you immediately'.*

*Many parents mentioned the atmosphere of the school as being 'like a family' and made such comments as 'Brilliant school. I'm very lucky to have my children there', and 'It's a pity dyslexic children aren't taught like that in all schools'.*



14. *For completion by consultants only: **Summary of Report including whether acceptance is recommended:** Acceptance is wholeheartedly recommended. In summing up Nunnykirk it is the parental comments about the sense of family that ring very true. This is a family where members are unusually caring of others feelings. When teachers were asked about their greatest challenges one teacher commented that it was the 'baggage they come with'. Often bags packed by previous schools, it would seem. When asked how these difficulties were overcome the answer was that they learn to trust and that the environment of the school helped - environment in all senses. The small classes and individual attention help to create a situation where pupils and teachers can trust each other and the informal -yet polite- atmosphere enables pupils to ask for help and talk about their work. In many ways Nunnykirk is unique, which is why some pupils come a long way to be there. Nunnykirk is looking into the possibility of having INSET regarding Autistic Spectrum Disorder as a speedy response to parental comment. Nunnykirk certainly puts the 'special' into the category of Specialist Dyslexic School.*

In October 2013 the CReSTeD Council agreed an update to the criteria, the application for re-registration was completed prior to the new criteria's publication. To help parents review the information contained in this report the criteria as it applied is shown below:-

<b>Consultant to tick relevant boxes when criteria are observed to have been met:</b>	
<b>Criteria</b>	<b>DSP</b>
1. The school implements a thorough and rigorous process for identifying dyslexic (SpLD) children.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2. The Senior Management Team and Governors fully support the provision for dyslexic (SpLD) pupils.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3. The impact of the provision for dyslexic (SpLD) pupils is measurable.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4. The school is established primarily to teach pupils with Dyslexia (SpLD).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6. Assessment for admission to the school should include a report from an Educational Psychologist or a Specialist Teacher who holds an Assessment Practising Certificate.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7. The Head of Learning Support (or equivalent) should normally hold a nationally recognised qualification for the teaching of dyslexic (SpLD) pupils.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8. As a minimum, all English teachers and teachers of literacy skills will have nationally recognised qualifications in the teaching of dyslexic (SpLD) children. In exceptional circumstances the consultant may recommend to Council that an experienced teacher or a teacher undergoing training satisfies this criterion.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9. All members of staff demonstrate the ability to meet the needs of dyslexic (SpLD) pupils within their own departments.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>