

Identifying Dyscalculia

Solihull LA's Pathway – a Guide for Parents/Carers

The identification of dyscalculia – a very specific maths learning difficulty affecting the concept of number and skills such as subitising – is a complex process which should happen over time, rather than through a one-off assessment. Solihull Local Authority have a team of specialist teachers able to support schools during this process, which is outlined in the table below.

If you are concerned about your child's understanding of number and with the development of their maths skills, please contact the school's SENCO.

Quality First Teaching (QFT)	Assessment and intervention over time
Schools should be able to evidence that their approach to the teaching of basic numeracy and mathematical skills is structured and cumulative, with lessons planned to ensure pupils “develop fluency, mathematical reasoning and competence in solving increasingly sophisticated problems” (DfE, 2014).	
Initial Screening	
Where concerns are raised regarding a child or young person's ability to understand and grasp basic number concepts, and to retain number facts (for example), school should complete an initial screening tool/checklist to identify specific areas of need, in order to ensure that appropriate resources are available in the classroom and provision made in small groups. If not already the case, you as a parent/carer should become involved at this point.	
Initial Intervention and Support	
Once a profiling tool has been completed it would be expected that classroom strategies and/or resources become more tailored to the individual CYP's learning needs. Additional intervention would also begin, targeting number concepts, basic operations etc. through evidence-based interventions. This should take place over 3-6 months (minimum) and progress monitored/tracked.	

Skills Assessment	Assessment and intervention over time
<p>At this stage more formal assessment is appropriate to ensure that the difficulties being experienced by the CYP include some of the key barriers implicated in dyscalculia e.g. subitising, understanding magnitude etc. This can be done in school by a teacher trained in using dyscalculia screening tests or a specialist teacher from the CLD team. Results can then be used to inform further targeted intervention and to decide whether or not it might be appropriate to pursue a comprehensive assessment in future.</p>	
Targeted Intervention	
<p>A CYP's difficulties with numeracy and maths will be targeted through regular, frequent, evidence-based multi-sensory interventions, adapted to suit the CYP and with opportunities for overlearning built in to the programme. This intervention should be delivered by someone who has undergone suitable training and that it takes place for a minimum of 3-6 months. Clear starting points and progress data should be collated.</p>	
Comprehensive Assessment	
<p>If difficulties persist, and the skills assessment indicated that the CYP's difficulties may be consistent with dyscalculia, a comprehensive assessment of the pupil's abilities and skills by a specialist teacher with an Assessment Practicing Certificate (APC) and relevant training and experience should take place. The resulting report will be proof-read by another specialist teacher with an APC and will conclude whether or not the pupil's currently presenting profile is consistent with dyscalculia or more general maths difficulties.</p>	

For further details, please see the full guidance document for schools:

Solihull LA: Pathways to the Identification of Dyslexia, Dyscalculia and Developmental Co-ordination Disorder (Dyspraxia)