

A Note from the Headteacher

OFSTED

You will know that we were inspected this week by OFSTED. Thank you to parents/carers who were able to complete the survey and share their views with the inspectors about the school. I must say how proud I am of the students who were outstanding in their communications with the team and really showed the best of themselves. Inspectors were also very impressed with the level of engagement from students in their learning. We are not yet able to share any outcomes with you and have to wait until the final report is published, which should be in 4-6 weeks' time. OFSTED has a new framework and no longer awards one overall judgement. Instead, a report card giving information on the 6 areas inspected, is generated. We will share more information about how that works when the final report is shared with you all.

Unfortunately, our intended plans for staff well-being week were impacted by the inspection and so we are looking to reschedule this either later in the term or early next term.

After School Clubs

After school clubs begin next week and will finish on Thursday 26th March. Due to significant training and limits on staff availability, we are not able to offer our usual selection of clubs this term. We hope to offer more for the Summer term, after the Easter break.

A reminder that clubs run from 3:10pm—4pm. The school transport service is not able to return to school to collect children who stay for a club so parents/carers/guardians should arrange for their child to be collected from the front of the school at the end of the club.

Clubs have a maximum number of students who can attend and places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. If you would like to book a place, please contact the school office.

Day	Club	Staffing	Club info	
Tuesday	Social Club	Mrs Verall and Miss Hounsell	Minimum: 6	Max: 12
Thursday	Reading Club	Mrs Kaminska	Minimum: 3	Max: 6

Please note: due to staff training, clubs will not run on the following dates: Tuesday 10th & 24th February, Tuesday 3rd & 24th March.

Wishing you all a restful weekend,

Mrs L. Fox, Headteacher.

How to contact us:

email the school at: office@st-nicholas.southend.sch.uk

Telephone: 01702 462322

KS3 HOME ECONOMICS COSTS



As part of our school's curriculum, we offer home economics to all students in KS3 (years 7, 8 & 9). This requires a small fee from parents for ingredients. Students are able to bring home their food, if a contribution is received.

The cost is **£10 per term**.

This can be paid for using our online payments system. Please contact the school office if you need help in getting set up on this system.

Thank you for your contributions.

INSET DAYS 2025-2026

23rd January, 23rd February, 29th June

TERM DATES 2025-2026:

Spring half term: 16th—20th Feb

Spring term ends: Fri 27th March

Summer term starts: Mon 13th April

Summer half term: 26th—29th May

Summer term ends: Mon 20th July

KEY DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

January

26th-30th		Functional Skills Level 1 & 2 Exam Week
26th	11:00am-12:30pm	Level 1 Functional Skills English (Reading)
28th	11:00am-2:45pm	Pioneer Travel Training Day
	11:00am-12:30pm	Level 1 Functional Skills English (Writing)
29th	10:00am-12:00pm	KS4 Visit to Belfairs Digital

February

2nd-6th		Entry Level Functional Skills Assessments
2nd	9:30am-12:30pm	RNLI Talks (Group Times TBC)
5th	11:00am-12:00pm	Level 1 Functional Skills Maths (Calc)
	11:30am-3:00pm	Latimer League Football Fixture at Whitetrees School
6th	10:30am-12:00pm	MP Bayo Alaba Visiting School
9th-13th		Entry Level Functional Skills Assessments
13th	2:15-3:00pm	End of Half-Term Awards Assembly
23rd	ALL DAY	INSET Day—School Closed for Students
24th-27th		Entry Level Functional Skills Speech & Language Assessments

March

16th-20th		Y11 Work Experience week 1
17th	3:30-7:00pm	KS3 Parents Evening
19th	3:30-7:00pm	KS4 Parents Evening
23rd-27th		Y11 Work Experience week 2

DATES IN **RED** ARE ADDITIONS OR EDITS SINCE LAST WEEK'S NEWSLETTER

SCHOOL MEALS

Monday 26th January will be week 1 of the menu.

WEEK 1		WEEK 2		WEEK 3	
MONDAY		MONDAY		MONDAY	
MAINS	Beef Burger in a Bun	MAINS	Shepherds Pie	MAINS	Lasagne
VEGETARIAN	Vegan Burger in a Bun	VEGETARIAN	Tomato Pasta	VEGETARIAN	Vegetarian Lasagne
SIDE	Diced Potato - Peas	SIDE	Baked Beans - Peas	SIDE	Garlic Bread - Broccoli
JACKET	Baked Beans or Cheese or Tuna Mayo	JACKET	Baked Beans or Cheese or Tuna Mayo	JACKET	Baked Beans or Cheese or Tuna Mayo
SANDWICH	Ham or Cheese or Tuna Mayo *Extras	SANDWICH	Ham or Cheese or Tuna Mayo *Extras	SANDWICH	Ham or Cheese or Tuna Mayo *Extras
DESSERT	Chocolate Sponge and Custard	DESSERT	Carrot Cake	DESSERT	Flapjack
TUESDAY		TUESDAY		TUESDAY	
MAINS	Sausages	MAINS	Chicken Nuggets	MAINS	Sausages in Tomato Sauce
VEGETARIAN	Quorn Sausages	VEGETARIAN	Quorn Nuggets	VEGETARIAN	Vegetarian Sausages
SIDE	Mash - Carrots - Gravy	SIDE	Pasta - Sweetcorn - Peas	SIDE	Pasta - Sweetcorn - Peas
JACKET	Baked Beans or Cheese or Tuna Mayo	JACKET	Baked Beans or Cheese or Tuna Mayo	JACKET	Baked Beans or Cheese or Tuna Mayo
SANDWICH	Ham or Cheese or Tuna Mayo *Extras	SANDWICH	Ham or Cheese or Tuna Mayo *Extras	SANDWICH	Ham or Cheese or Tuna Mayo *Extras
DESSERT	Fruit or Yogurt	DESSERT	Plain Sponge and Custard	DESSERT	Fruit or Yogurt
WEDNESDAY		WEDNESDAY		WEDNESDAY	
MAINS	Garmon	MAINS	Roast Chicken	MAINS	Garmon
VEGETARIAN	Quorn Fillet	VEGETARIAN	Cauliflower Cheese	VEGETARIAN	Quorn Fillet
SIDE	Roast Potatoes - Carrots - Peas	SIDE	Roast Potatoes - Carrots - Cabbage	SIDE	Roast Potatoes - Carrots - Cabbage
JACKET	Baked Beans or Cheese or Tuna Mayo	JACKET	Baked Beans or Cheese or Tuna Mayo	JACKET	Baked Beans or Cheese or Tuna Mayo
SANDWICH	Ham or Cheese or Tuna Mayo *Extras	SANDWICH	Ham or Cheese or Tuna Mayo *Extras	SANDWICH	Ham or Cheese or Tuna Mayo *Extras
DESSERT	Iced Sponge	DESSERT	Fruit or Yogurt	DESSERT	Jelly
THURSDAY		THURSDAY		THURSDAY	
MAINS	Chicken Tikka Massala	MAINS	Spaghetti Bolognese	MAINS	Cheese & Tomato Pasta
VEGETARIAN	Stir Fry Noodles	VEGETARIAN	Tomato Pasta	VEGETARIAN	Tomato Pasta
SIDE	Rice - Peas - Sweetcorn	SIDE	Garlic Bread - Peas - Sweetcorn	SIDE	Peas - Sweetcorn
JACKET	Baked Beans or Cheese or Tuna Mayo	JACKET	Baked Beans or Cheese or Tuna Mayo	JACKET	Baked Beans or Cheese or Tuna Mayo
SANDWICH	Ham or Cheese or Tuna Mayo *Extras	SANDWICH	Ham or Cheese or Tuna Mayo *Extras	SANDWICH	Ham or Cheese or Tuna Mayo *Extras
DESSERT	Ice Cream	DESSERT	Angel Delight	DESSERT	Muffin
FRIDAY		FRIDAY		FRIDAY	
MAINS	Fish Fingers	MAINS	Pepperoni Pizza	MAINS	Cod Fillets
VEGETARIAN	Fishless Fingers	VEGETARIAN	Cheese Pizza	VEGETARIAN	Fishless Fingers
SIDE	Chips - Baked Beans - Peas	SIDE	Chips - Baked Beans - Peas	SIDE	Chips - Baked Beans - Peas
JACKET	Baked Beans or Cheese or Tuna Mayo	JACKET	Baked Beans or Cheese or Tuna Mayo	JACKET	Baked Beans or Cheese or Tuna Mayo
SANDWICH	Ham or Cheese or Tuna Mayo *Extras	SANDWICH	Ham or Cheese or Tuna Mayo *Extras	SANDWICH	Ham or Cheese or Tuna Mayo *Extras
DESSERT	Fruit or Yogurt	DESSERT	Fruit or Yogurt	DESSERT	Fruit or Yogurt

***Extras - Lettuce, Cucumber, Tomatoes, Peppers or Savoury Snack**

FRESH FRUIT, YOGURTS AND WHOLEMEAL BREAD ARE AVAILABLE DAILY.

MOST DISHES ARE MADE DAILY AND ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

A #WakeUpWednesday guide examining Roblox's user-created games, highlighting risks around chat, spending and excessive play for children.

At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

ROBLOX

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Roblox is an online platform where users can play and create games known as 'experiences' made by other users. Roblox has a large UK audience. ITV News has reported that millions of people in Britain use the platform regularly, with children forming a significant proportion of its users. The sheer scale of it makes it extremely difficult to moderate effectively, creating risks for unsupervised children.

A PLATFORM RATHER THAN A GAME

Roblox differs from traditional video games in that it hosts millions of user-created experiences rather than a fixed set of developer-produced content. Each experience is self-rated by its creator rather than independently age-rated in advance, as is the case with PEGI-rated games. With millions of user-created experiences, moderation is largely automated which means that inappropriate content may reach younger players and have a harmful effect.

MATURE CONTENT

With much of Roblox's moderation automated through AI and creators self-certifying suitability, inappropriate content frequently appears on the platform. Some experiences may include content intended for older players. While Roblox has tools to restrict access based on age settings, these systems are not always perfect. Younger players are likely to encounter content you may deem unsuitable.

IN-GAME SPENDING

Roblox is free to play, but many experiences and cosmetics include optional purchases using Robux, the platform's virtual currency, to get advantages in games. This business model is common across online games, but reporting has highlighted cases where children have spent large amounts of money unintentionally or without understanding the real-world cost.

RISK OF ADDICTION

Roblox encourages repeated and extended play. Many experiences are made of short tasks, rewards, and progression systems that can prompt users to keep playing for longer periods of time. Some games also use reminders, daily rewards, or timed events to encourage frequent logins. These designs can make it difficult to stop playing. Spending long periods online may affect sleep, schoolwork, or other activities if boundaries are not in place.

COMMUNICATION WITH OTHER USERS

Roblox includes text and voice features that allow players to chat in shared game spaces. While the platform uses automated filters and moderation tools, media investigations have found that inappropriate and potentially harmful messages can still get through. There are risks that children could be targeted by groomers. In response, Roblox has announced changes to how chat works. The platform plans to use facial age-estimation technology to restrict chat access between adults and children they do not know.

Advice for Parents & Educators

USE PARENTAL CONTROLS

Roblox's parental controls provide an important starting point. Linking a child's account to an adult account allows parents to apply spending controls, limit communication features, and review recent activity. Regular supervision, use of parental controls, and conversations with children about what they see online can help reduce the risk of exposure to inappropriate content.

CONSIDER LIMITING OR DISABLING CHAT

Although Roblox is introducing tighter age-based chat restrictions, some parents and educators may prefer to disable chat entirely for younger children. Children can still play games while communicating with friends they know through other supervised platforms.

PLAY TOGETHER WHERE POSSIBLE

Playing Roblox with a child can help adults understand the types of experiences available, how monetisation works, and how children interact online. This shared engagement can also make it easier for children to raise concerns if something feels wrong. Parents and educators should monitor all games played on Roblox due to its self-rating nature.

ENCOURAGE OPEN CONVERSATIONS

Many Roblox experiences are creative and age appropriate, and for many children, the platform is an important way to socialise with friends. Rather than banning it outright, parents and educators should talk openly with children about online safety, spending, and how to respond to inappropriate behaviour.

Meet Our Expert

Alan Martin is a technology journalist who has written for publications including Wired, TechRadar, The Telegraph, The Evening Standard, The Guardian and The New Statesman.



The National College

See full reference list on our website

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This guide offers advice on how to establish suitable, effective rules around the use of digital devices in your household.

At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators CREATING FAMILY RULES FOR USING DEVICES

A set of family rules agreed on with children can promote the safe, responsible use of devices like tablets, smartphones, gaming consoles and computers. By developing rules around technology, it opens the conversation regarding boundaries and expectations, ensuring a healthy balance of screen time. This guide will help you to develop an age-appropriate family agreement to suit your household.

- 1 WORK TOGETHER**
Involve your child when setting rules on devices to encourage them to take ownership.
- 2 AGREE TIME LIMITS AND SUITABLE TIMES**
Set screen time limits. This could be 2 hours max a day. Agree times when devices must be put away and stick to it.
- 3 ENCOURAGE HONESTY**
Encourage your child to come to you if they are upset about something they've done, so you can resolve it together.
- 4 CHARGING AND OVERNIGHT STORAGE**
To ensure children get the downtime they need overnight, it's important that devices are kept in a common space (e.g. your bedroom or a charging box).
- 5 REVIEW RULES REGULARLY**
Take time to regularly review the rules as a family; what's working, and what isn't. Get them to sign the rules you agree on.
- 6 PROTECT PERSONAL INFO**
Discuss with your child about protecting their personal information. Use parental controls to block children from connecting with strangers.
- 7 BE RESPECTFUL**
Talk to them about being respectful when using technology. Explain that if they are being unkind, they will need to stay away from their devices for a while.
- 8 "NO TECH" ZONES**
Have spaces where technology isn't allowed (e.g. bedrooms, bathrooms and at the dinner table).
- 9 AGREE ON CONSEQUENCES**
Agree with your child on some fair consequences if any of these rules are broken and follow them through.
- 10 KNOW ALL PASSWORDS**
Parents should have access to all passwords. Make it clear that you will check their devices regularly.

Meet Our Expert
Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant at iCybercare. She has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety workshops and policies for schools in Australia and the UK. Claire has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviours of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.

#WakeUpWednesday
The National College

Download full reference list for guide: nationalcollege.com/guides/tips-for-creating-family-rules-for-using-devices

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Southend-on-Sea
City Council

IN CELEBRATION OF CHILDREN'S
MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

YOUTH FEST

CHILD & YOUTH
SERVICES

ACTIVITIES &
MUSIC

WELL-BEING

SATURDAY 14TH FEBRUARY 2026

10AM - 4PM

THE VICTORIA SHOPPING CENTRE

THE
VICTORIA
CENTRE

SOUTHEND



Dyslexia Factsheet



Dyslexia is a lifelong, genetic, neurological Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) which primarily affects the skills involved in accurate and fluent word reading and spelling. It affects all genders, ethnicities and social groups, and its impact can range from mild to severe.



It is a specific learning difficulty because it only impacts particular aspects of learning and is not connected to intellectual ability. Some people prefer to use the term Specific Learning Difference.



There can be early indicators of dyslexia such as slower acquisition of speech and language skills, but it is usually first noticeable when a child struggles to learn literacy skills. Formal diagnosis is not needed for support to be put in place at school.



Dyslexia is a hidden disability and many of the signs of dyslexia are not obvious in the way depression, anxiety or a physical disability can be. It is most visible in the impact it can have on reading and writing skills, but it can also have a less visible impact upon information processing and working memory. This affects the amount of information that someone can remember and the speed with which they can access and recall information.



In adults, challenges with reading, writing, and spelling may be hidden. Most will have good coping strategies, but tasks which need these skills will require more time and effort than might be expected and the impact this has on an individual can often go unseen. Some may try to avoid these tasks wherever possible.



There are some common traits associated with dyslexia, but it is important to understand that it affects everyone differently, and each person will have their own unique profile of strengths and challenges. Dyslexia often occurs with other specific learning difficulties such as dyscalculia or dyspraxia/DCD which also impact upon an individual's profile.



Dyslexia can present daily barriers in education, in the workplace and in life, and many find it hard to thrive in a system that often fails to recognise, value, or encourage them. They may feel shame for their differences, which may be misinterpreted as lack of ability, laziness or conduct issues. This can have a big impact upon their confidence and self-esteem, as well as limiting life choices.



A diagnosis can be made by a Specialist Teacher Assessor with an Assessment Practicing Certificate (APC) or an HCPC registered Educational Psychologist but diagnosis is not routinely carried out at school. Cost can be a prohibitive factor and many dyslexic people are never formally diagnosed.



Simple changes or adjustments at school and in the workplace based on individual needs can have a big impact on the lives of dyslexic people.

More information about Dyslexia can be found on our website:
www.bdadyslexia.org.uk

bdadyslexia.org.uk

British Dyslexia Association is a registered charity in England and Wales (289243).
Registered in England and Wales as a company limited by guarantee (1830587).

Definition of Dyslexia

The BDA has adopted the Delphi definition of dyslexia (March 2025):

Dyslexia is a set of processing difficulties that affect the acquisition of reading and spelling.

In dyslexia, some or all aspects of literacy attainment are weak in relation to age, standard teaching and instruction, and level of other attainments.

Across all languages, difficulties in reading fluency and spelling are key markers of dyslexia.

Dyslexic difficulties exist on a continuum and can be experienced to various degrees of severity.

The nature and developmental trajectory of dyslexia depends on multiple genetic and environmental influences.

Dyslexia can affect the acquisition of other skills, such as mathematics, reading comprehension or learning another language.

The most commonly observed cognitive impairment in dyslexia is a difficulty in phonological processing (i.e., in phonological awareness, phonological processing speed or phonological memory). However, phonological difficulties do not fully explain the variability that is observed.

Working memory, processing speed and orthographic skills can contribute to the impact of dyslexia.



Facts and Figures



This means that dyslexia affects 10% of the population. That's around 6.7 million people in the UK.

OVER
1 Million

school children
in the UK have
dyslexia. **Many**
are undiagnosed.

OVER
3.3 Million

adults in the
workplace. **Many**
are undiagnosed.

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