Supporting children with a Specific Learning Difficulty (Dyslexia)
Recommendations for Classroom Support Planning

Be aware of:
- Strengths as well as weaknesses
- Differences in learning for a child with dyslexia
- The need to establish a safe environment for making mistakes and asking for help
- The issues for the dyslexic child around self-confidence and self-esteem
  (see DVD Understanding Dyslexia by DES)
- Be aware that you cannot do everything though your role is central to the child’s experience as a learner.

Management issues:
- Seating (near teacher, good eye-line etc.)
- Study Buddies or peer tutoring
- Copying from the blackboard needs to be kept to a minimum
- Over-learning and over-teaching
- Homework….what accommodations are necessary?
- Spelling- how will this be managed?
- Helping children with organisational difficulties (e.g. books to bring, equipment etc.)

Teaching Style:
- Use the child’s experience when teaching specific skills
- See Section 3, pp 35-41 in Inclusive Dyslexic-Friendly Practice
  http://www.sess.ie/categories/specific-learning-disabilities/dyslexia/additional-resourcesreferences
- Use coloured chalk and markers for board work
- Use different coloured alternate lines on board
- Number each line of text at either end on board
- Introduce cream coloured paper instead of white
- Avoid long statements, instructions or questions, and repeat where necessary
- Allow for different reporting style e.g. oral presentations
- Use handouts where possible to reduce writing load (e.g. writing words of songs or poems or avoid re-writing question from text book)

This NEPS Handout has been developed by educational psychologists and is based on current knowledge in this area. It is intended as a guide only. Not all the advice here may apply to any one student or situation. Teachers and parents may wish to identify the strategies that will work best for them.
Liaison/ Partnership:
- Timetable simultaneous meetings between Class Teacher, Learning Support Teacher and Parent
- In meeting discuss - targets, roles, accommodations (e.g. adaptations for homework and spelling tests)

Tracking Progress:
- Track progress (in reading, maths, spelling) using standardised tests and diagnostic tests, e.g. in Maths.
- Use different methods of reporting e.g. oral presentation in Maths tests
- Be aware of the need for ongoing assessment as problems may emerge as the child progresses (progress in spelling & written expression may not match reading progress)

Methods and Materials:
See: Providing an Effective Response to Dyslexia in the Classroom in the Report of the Task Force on Dyslexia, Chapter 6, p 93.
- Multi-sensory methods (e.g. SOS / Read, Say, Cover, Write, Check)
- Build high frequency words into spelling and reading
- Paired Reading – a proven method whether child is in role of tutee or tutor
- Books on CD with matching text and Hi/Lo reading materials
- Paired Mathematics
- Paired Writing – benefits include being able to separate composition and mechanics of writing
- Introduce and reinforce meta cognitive techniques (e.g. cue cards) that enable the child to exercise control over his learning
- Provide support through the appropriate use of IT
- Use discussion to promote understanding, learning and retention