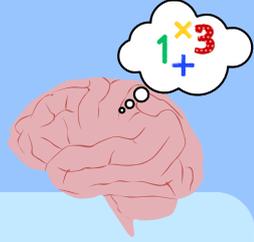


Understanding Dyscalculia: Recognising and Supporting Mathematical Learning Differences



What is Dyscalculia?

According to the SpLD Assessment Standards Committee (SASC, 2025):

"In dyscalculia, the most commonly observed cognitive impairment is a pronounced and persistent difficulty with numerical magnitude processing and understanding that presents in age-related difficulties with naming, ordering and comparing physical quantities and numbers, estimating and place value."

Dyscalculia is not simply a case of "struggling with maths" or needing more practice. Instead, it reflects differences in how the brain processes numerical information, making even basic mathematical concepts hard to grasp. Dyscalculia occurs across the full range of intelligence and is not a reflection of ability or motivation.

It's important to remember that dyscalculia does not define a child's potential. Many children with this learning difference show strengths in areas such as creativity and imagination, strong verbal reasoning and storytelling, and innovative approaches to problem-solving. By focusing on these strengths, parents and educators can help build resilience and ensure children see themselves as capable, talented, and more than their difficulties with maths.

Recognising the signs

Children and young people with dyscalculia often find that numbers don't "make sense" in the way they do for their peers. This can affect basic number concepts such as counting, place value, and recognising patterns, as well as everyday skills like telling the time, handling money, or following sequences. Many also struggle to recall maths facts, including multiplication tables or mental arithmetic. These difficulties are consistent and persistent, and they can have a significant impact on a child's confidence both in school and in daily life.



Signs to look out for

- Demonstrates a significantly slower pace than peers in learning to count or to recognise written numbers.
- Difficulty remembering and understanding maths facts, even after repeated practice.
- Trouble estimating quantities or comparing amounts.
- Anxiety or avoidance around homework or tasks involving numbers.
- For older individuals you may recognise challenges with budgeting, managing timetables, or navigating directions.

How can you help?

- **Make maths meaningful:** Everyday activities such as cooking, shopping, or playing board games can provide simple, practical opportunities to explore numbers.
- **Celebrate effort, persistence, and problem-solving strategies** rather than focusing only on accuracy or speed.
- **Use technology and tools:** Maths apps, visual supports, and calculators can be helpful aids, building both confidence and understanding.
- **Communicate with school:** Work in partnership with teachers to ensure your child receives the right support, such as additional processing time or multi-sensory teaching approaches.

If you are concerned your child may be showing signs of dyscalculia, our team of experienced specialists can help. We provide educational psychologist assessments, personalised advice, and practical strategies to support your child both at home and in school. Get in touch to start the conversation.



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