

Meeting: Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee
Date: 23 January 2017
Title: Dyslexia Services

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Service: Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding
Wards affected: All

1. Purpose of Report

To provide information of the Authority's Dyslexia Services. The report looks at identification, provision and outcomes.

2. Recommendation(s)

The sub-committee is recommended to consider the report attached and make any comments and/or recommendations as appropriate.

3. Details

See attached report.

4. Appendices

Dyslexia Team Report.



North Tyneside Dyslexia Team Report

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North Tyneside Dyslexia Team Report

January 2017

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Dyslexia Team is a small team of specialist teachers with post-graduate qualifications in dyslexia and literacy difficulties. The team has a preventative remit, to instigate early identification and intervention in North Tyneside's 73 mainstream schools. The aim is, where possible, to prevent needs from escalating using an intensive approach at pre EHC plan level. The team is available to provide general advice and guidance to all schools in the borough.
- 1.2 During the past two years, the Dyslexia Team has undergone a review of its systems, procedures and working practices to ensure that a high quality service is available to schools, pupils and parents/carers in North Tyneside. Guidance from national bodies such as the Specific Learning Difficulties Assessment Standards Committee (SASC) informs the team's report writing standards and this is monitored annually through the team's performance management process. Developments from recent research and thinking in the field of dyslexia inform our policy, practice, training content and advice.
- 1.3 Following a successful business case for Schools' Forum in October 2015, the Dyslexia Team was able to increase the number of its specialist teachers from 3 to 3.8 in April 2016. Although the team remains small, this additional staffing has enabled the team to address the growing demand from schools for its range of specialist services, whilst maintaining high standards in its practice. At the same time, the Dyslexia Team has been able to expand its capacity building initiatives to support schools in developing robust systems for early identification and targeted intervention.
- 1.4 Training was provided by the Dyslexia Team for school Sencos at an All Phases Network Meeting in September 2016. Presentations were provided by the Dyslexia Team for Secondary Head Teachers in May 2016 and for Primary Head Teachers in June 2016 to ensure that they were informed about the team's provision for pupils in North Tyneside.

2. Prompt identification of needs, early intervention and longer term support

- 2.1 Careful gate-keeping and informative responses to incomplete or inappropriate referrals help to guide school Sencos with regard to future referrals to the team. This has reduced the number of inappropriate or incomplete referrals sent by schools. (See [Appendix Chart 3](#)).
- 2.2 Pupils referred appropriately to the Dyslexia Team have their needs identified promptly through detailed specialist assessment. During 2015-16, the Dyslexia Team met 100% of its time deadlines for initial assessments and reviews of progress. This enables pupils to be seen promptly, advice provided and intervention programmes started without delay.
- 2.3 Following a review of assessment materials, the team has updated and expanded the range of assessment materials which it uses. Guidance from the national Specific Learning Difficulties Assessment Standards Committee (SASC) and from specialist courses attended by team members has informed the choice of assessment materials purchased. This has enabled the team to assess pupils using recently standardised tests of reading and spelling which reflect the current school population. Assessments of underlying skills such as phonological awareness and verbal memory are now assessed in greater detail using recently standardised assessments.
- 2.4 The use of these detailed assessment materials has enabled the team to identify specific difficulties which impact on the development of literacy and numeracy skills. This specific information in the team's reports is valued by schools and parents, as confirmed by qualitative and quantitative data from our Service Users' Response Forms. Some comments from school Sencos are as follows:

“We find the pinpointing of specific difficulties very useful and the detailed programmes provided really help the children to fill the gaps and make good progress.”

“Very specific assessment that pinpoints targets and strategies for the child. Very useful resources provided or signposted. Clear feedback to staff and parents. We have many pupils who have literacy issues and all have made progress by using the advice and resources from the Dyslexia team.”

- 2.5 The team has been able to provide an increased level of informal training for schools since April 2016, through delivering demonstration lessons for teachers and teaching assistants to observe. Research from the Education Endowment Foundation shows that training of teaching assistants is crucial for effective intervention (see report dated 27 February 2015 from the EEF website). Our feedback evaluations indicate that this informal training has been appreciated by schools. A comparison with the responses from schools in July 2014 when the team had only 3 specialist teachers shows a significant improvement in schools’ evaluations of the team’s service. (Charts 1 & 2).
- 2.6 Some pupils may have co-occurring difficulties which impact on their progress. The Dyslexia Team works in partnership with a range of agencies and specialist teams in North Tyneside to address pupils’ needs.
- 2.7 The Dyslexia Team is able to provide a year’s direct team involvement for all caseload pupils. This includes two formal reviews of progress by the Dyslexia Team at 6 monthly intervals. Our data indicates that one review of progress is not sufficient for caseload pupils with significant literacy difficulties who need specialist teaching. (Chart 5).
- 2.8 In the case of some pupils with persistent, specific literacy difficulties, the team has recently been able to extend its involvement to 18 months, with possible further informal involvement of the team if needed. This has enabled the team to provide longer term support for the most vulnerable pupils, thus supporting schools in preventing problems from escalating. This approach reflects priorities from North Tyneside’s Inclusion Strategy. Whilst this extension of the team’s input is still at an early stage, our initial data from those pupils who have received a 3rd review of progress from the Dyslexia Team indicates that the provision of additional time from the team is of considerable benefit.
- 2.9 Pupils who have severe and persistent specific literacy or numeracy difficulties may be offered a longer term annual review and monitoring service from the Dyslexia Team using North Tyneside’s SEN Support Plan. Advice from the local authority indicates that there may be a reduction in the provision of EHC Plans for pupils with severe and persistent specific literacy or numeracy difficulties who do not have other complex issues with learning. Extended support from the Dyslexia Team using the SEN Support Plan would provide a formal monitoring process for pupils who would not receive an EHC Plan. Currently (January 2017) the team has 23 pupils with Statements/EHC plans for dyslexia/specific learning difficulties in comparison with 42 in September 2016 and 48 in September 2015. It is not anticipated that this provision using the SEN Support Plan instead of an EHC plan would reduce the team’s workload, as the process would need to involve the same rigour and support and would provide longer term provision for pupils with the greatest need. This provision would help to facilitate successful progression for these pupils through the mainstream system. (Chart 4).

2.10 Outcomes

- 2.10.1 Pupils have their needs identified promptly through the use of recently standardised detailed assessments informed by recommendations from the Specific Learning Difficulties Assessment Standards Committee (SASC).
- 2.10.2 Early intervention is facilitated through the provision of a targeted intervention programme informed by our assessments. This is accompanied by signposting and provision of appropriate resources.
- 2.10.3 Confidence is developed within schools through informal training and demonstration lessons delivered by specialist teachers from the team.

2.10.4 Longer term provision is available from the Dyslexia Team, in discussion with specialist team teachers, for some pupils with severe and persistent, primary needs associated with dyslexia or dyscalculia.

3. Increase in specialist teaching for pupils with persistent literacy difficulties

3.1 The team has been able to provide once weekly 10-12 session blocks of specialist teaching to an increased number of pupils with severe and persistent needs. The projected number of pupils who will receive this service from the team during 2016-17 has increased to 18 in comparison to 14 pupils during 2015-16. This intensive specialist intervention forms a key part of the team's preventative work.

3.2 A secondary Senco's response in September 2015 when asked how the team could improve its service to schools is as follows:

"More specialist teaching time in school with students with Dyslexia. We have 1 child receiving support at the moment and it is making a great impact."

3.3 Outcome

Dyslexia Team data shows that pupils who have made little or no progress with literacy skills make accelerated progress following specialist teaching from the Dyslexia Team, provided that this is followed up by targeted intervention in school. The impact of this specialist provision helps to close the gap between these vulnerable pupils and their peers. (Charts 5 & 6).

4. Whole school twilight training for schools in all phases

4.1 The Dyslexia Team has developed its whole school twilight training to build capacity within North Tyneside's schools, with specialist training provided for at least 148 staff during 2016-17. (Chart 11).

4.2 Bespoke twilight training packages have been written for schools in different phases, including a new package for middle schools which has been delivered to two schools since April 2016. A comment received from one middle school teacher is as follows:

"Great ideas today - lots of strategies I can use straight away in my planning. I feel I have developed my understanding overall."

4.3 Outcome

Evaluations from all twilight training sessions confirm that the Dyslexia Team's training input has resulted in increased confidence from school staff in their ability to address the needs of pupils with persistent literacy difficulties. All schools are provided with guidance for whole school post-training action planning to maximise the benefit of the training they have received. (Charts 7 & 8).

5. Expansion in workshop training for all schools

5.1 The Dyslexia Team has been able to expand the number of training workshops delivered, with a projected increase in workshops accessible to all schools in North Tyneside to 7 during 2016-17. This will enable at least 129 school staff to receive workshop training during 2016-17. (Chart 11).

5.2 Since April 2016, the team has delivered 3 new workshops tailored to school staff working in KS3. This phase has been identified by the team and secondary school Sencos as an area which would benefit from additional training input. Middle and Secondary school staff have responded well to these training sessions.

5.3 The Dyslexia Team offers informal advice and access to workshop training and resources to staff from special schools. This will include the provision of 2 literacy training workshops in January and February 2017 specifically tailored to special school staff in conjunction with the Head of English at Southlands School.

5.4 The team has designed and produced an increased range of bespoke resources suitable for different key stages to address pupils' literacy difficulties.

These include informal assessment checklists to support monitoring of pupil progress with phonics, reading and spelling. The resources are explained in detail in our workshops and school staff are provided with opportunities to practise delivery with support from the Dyslexia Team.

5.5 Outcome

Evaluations following workshop training sessions confirm improvement in staff confidence and knowledge to deliver appropriate intervention for pupils in their schools. Comments from the Dyslexia Team's workshop training include the following:

"It was very useful to attend a session where you were practically involved in activities to use with pupils - gave you confidence to carry out support." (Charts 9 & 10).

6. Further roll-out of the Inclusive Dyslexia Friendly Schools Award

6.1 The Inclusive Dyslexia Friendly Schools Award requirements reflect priorities from North Tyneside's Inclusion Strategy. The award process has enabled schools which have achieved the award to develop their capacity to address pupils' needs through improving their systems for early identification and targeted intervention. This has been complemented by appropriate in-class adaptations to make learning accessible for all pupils, with a consistent approach evident throughout the school. Arrangements are also in place to support pupils at transition points in their education.

6.2 The team has written a bespoke award for Middle Schools which is ready for roll-out to that sector. Liaison with secondary schools regarding an award tailored to this sector has been offered to secondary head teachers and Sencos through presentations and the Senco network.

6.3 Six First/Primary Schools have now achieved the award. The First/Primary school sector will have two further schools embarking on the award during 2016-17, with two schools beginning the award renewal process. An estimated 76 school staff will receive training in the Inclusive Dyslexia Friendly School Award during 2016-17. (Chart 11).

6.4 Outcomes

6.4.1 The increased confidence within schools which have achieved the award has enabled school staff to address many pupils' needs in-house through an inclusive approach. Data from our records of level of service to schools demonstrate the capacity building impact of the Inclusive Dyslexia Friendly Schools Award. (Chart 12).

6.4.2 Schools which have achieved the award are encouraged to share good practice with other schools in the local authority, with networking facilitated by the Dyslexia Team.

6.4.3 Comments from schools which have achieved the award include the following:

"The Dyslexia Friendly School award has been a valuable process which has helped us to support our dyslexic students more effectively.....Dyslexia friendly teaching strategies have been embedded in all classrooms which have benefited ALL pupils."

"The rigorous assessment process involved in achieving the Dyslexia Friendly School Award has been of great benefit to (our school)..... We are delighted to receive an award that acknowledges the commitment of the staff to providing an inclusive curriculum which meets the needs of all our pupils."

7. Strategic outreach work

7.1 As schools develop their capacity to identify needs early and intervene appropriately, this enables the Dyslexia Team to focus on outreach work to schools who have not yet engaged a great deal with the team. This work is being developed during 2016-17 through liaison with the Schools' Improvement Service and through dialogue with Sencos, other local authority agencies and specialist teams as appropriate.

7.2 The team is currently involved in outreach support to several primary schools, one middle school and two secondary schools.

A response received in October 2016 from a Senco in a primary school which has recently begun to engage more with the Dyslexia Team:

“We have always had such high quality support from the team. We can see impact in pupil data, confidence and well-being.”

The longer term impact of this work will be measured using the team’s strategic outreach planning tool, alongside feedback from school Sencos and support staff.

(Chart 13).

7.3 During this academic year, the Dyslexia Team is also working in collaboration with the Schools Improvement Service and with Sencos to improve the transition process for pupils transferring from one phase of their education to the next.

7.4 Outcome

In discussion with schools and other agencies, training needs are identified and outreach from the team is tailored to the needs of individual schools within North Tyneside. This contributes to the team’s overview of outreach planning for local authority schools.

8. Data from service users: responses from schools, pupils and parents/carers

8.1 Careful planning of administrative support has facilitated access to the team by parents, students, schools and other agencies on every week day in term time. Using administrative support, the Dyslexia Team has been able to collate, analyse and respond to a range of qualitative and quantitative data regarding the team’s work. This informs team planning and priorities throughout the year and is essential for our accountability as a local authority specialist team.

8.2 Information about the team’s work is also accessible through the team’s Twitter account, the North Tyneside CPD website and the team’s webpage on Southlands School website. The team’s Local Offer is updated every year in consultation with parents.

8.3 Outcome

In addition to the positive responses to our questionnaires from schools, responses from primary pupils, secondary students and parents/carers indicate high levels of confidence and satisfaction in the service provided by the Dyslexia Team (Appendix 1, Appendix 2: Charts 2, 14, 15 & 16).

9. Summary

9.1 A comprehensive review of the Dyslexia Team’s procedures and practice has enabled the team to provide a high quality service on behalf of the local authority. Our service combines targeted involvement with mainstream school pupils who have persistent specific literacy or numeracy needs alongside capacity building within schools. Access to training, resources and informal advice is available to staff in all schools in North Tyneside, with a total of at least 638 school staff receiving training from the Dyslexia Team over a 2 year period by July 2017.

9.2 Comments from our service users indicate that the team’s priorities of early identification, capacity building through training and support regarding targeted intervention are appreciated. The message which we are receiving from schools, pupils, students and parents/carers is that the preventative service provided by the Dyslexia Team is effective. Pupil progress data and outcomes confirm that the Dyslexia Team’s provision is helping many pupils with significant specific literacy and numeracy difficulties to make successful progression through the mainstream system.

January 2017
Mary MacKenzie,
Dyslexia Team Leader

Appendix 1

Qualitative Data

Comments from school Sencos from September 2015 –October 2016:

What has worked well in the Dyslexia Team's service to your school?

"Detailed reports which show pupils' strengths and weaknesses. A comprehensive folder of activities and strategies to support individual pupils' needs. Good liaison with the team throughout the year. Advice given for pupils with literacy difficulties that don't quite fit the criteria for a referral. Recent training session with SENDCO and LSAs to demonstrate delivery of intervention sessions. Guidance on how to modify intervention in order to improve outcomes for pupils."

"The very thorough and empathetic feedback meetings where parents are made to feel at ease and able to voice any concerns and ask questions. Excellent set of comprehensive resources provided by the service for each child."

"The team has been one of the most organised and supportive agencies, understanding the need to follow up referrals quickly and act upon them."

"Feel that over the last 18 months there has been a huge improvement in the service offered by the Dyslexia Team. Staff are knowledgeable, approachable and efficient. The management and organisation of this service should be used as a blue print for others in the LEA."

Comments from caseload pupils: 2015-16, 2016-17

"I used to not like showing people my work but now I do like showing people my work. My teaching assistant has been helping me a lot but now I don't need so much help."

"I've gone from being really nervous to not being afraid to read out to the class."

"Now I don't have to ask the teacher because I am more confident to spell words myself."

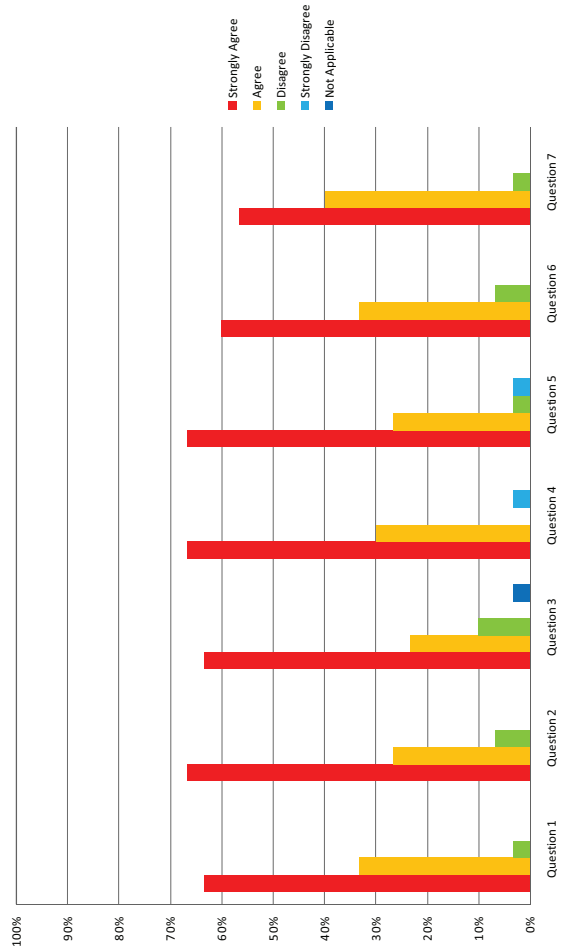
Comments from parents/carers: 2015-16; 2016-17

"I was so impressed with (name of Dyslexia Team Specialist Teacher). She was extremely professional and informative. I felt really confident after our meeting as to where to go from now with my daughter's learning. I also feel that she was exceptionally thorough in her assessment and even went out of her way to make another visit. Thank you."

"(Name of specialist teacher) was fantastic. She explained thoroughly the report to us in detail. We both feel confident and reassured and much happier that (child's name) is in safe hands, in a good school, with amazing support from the best people."

"A huge thank you for the help you have given our son (child's name) over the last 3 years... He left school with 7 GCSEs including a merit and distinction in Engineering....None of this would have been possible without your support and encouragement and we will always be grateful for the care, time and understanding you have given to (child's name) to help him manage his difficulties at school. This is no exaggeration – he really struggled before your intervention.....You do a really vital job - never think that you're not making a difference because you most certainly are!"

Schools' Evaluations of the Team's Performance 2014



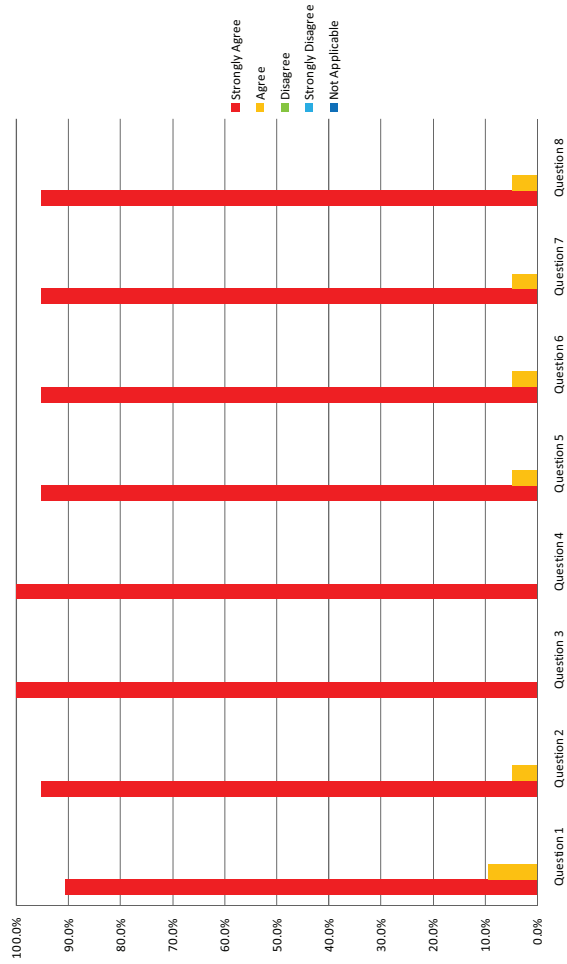
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Evaluations from schools when the Dyslexia Team had only 3 specialist teachers. Statements which schools were asked to respond to using the following – Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree, Not Applicable.

1. The DT assesses pupils within eight term time weeks of a referral being accepted.
2. Following assessment the DT teacher contacts the SENCO regarding a feedback meeting. This is held within 3 term time weeks of assessment.
3. The DT teacher contacts the SENCO within 6 months of previous assessment to arrange reviews of pupil progress.
4. Resources are provided following every assessment at the feedback meeting.
5. Teaching assistants are supported through modelling of new resources.
6. A consistent service is provided by the team.
7. I am satisfied with the service provided by the DT for my school.

(Comparison is made with schools' evaluations from July 2014 as the team had additional staff during 2015 as a result of temporary additional funding).

Schools' Evaluations of the Team's Performance 2016

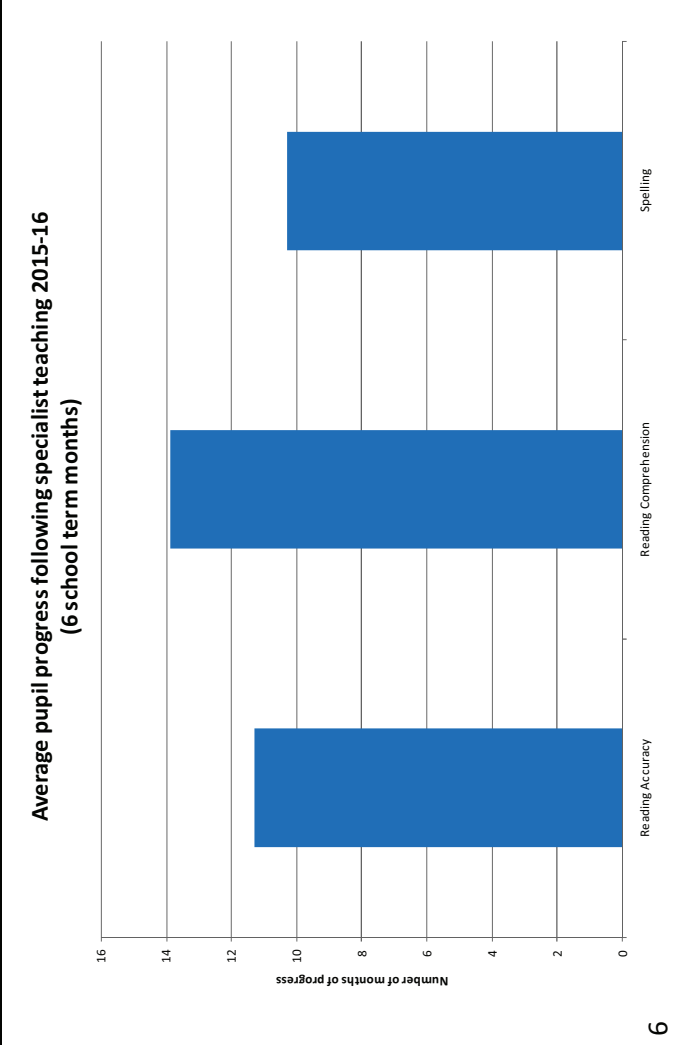
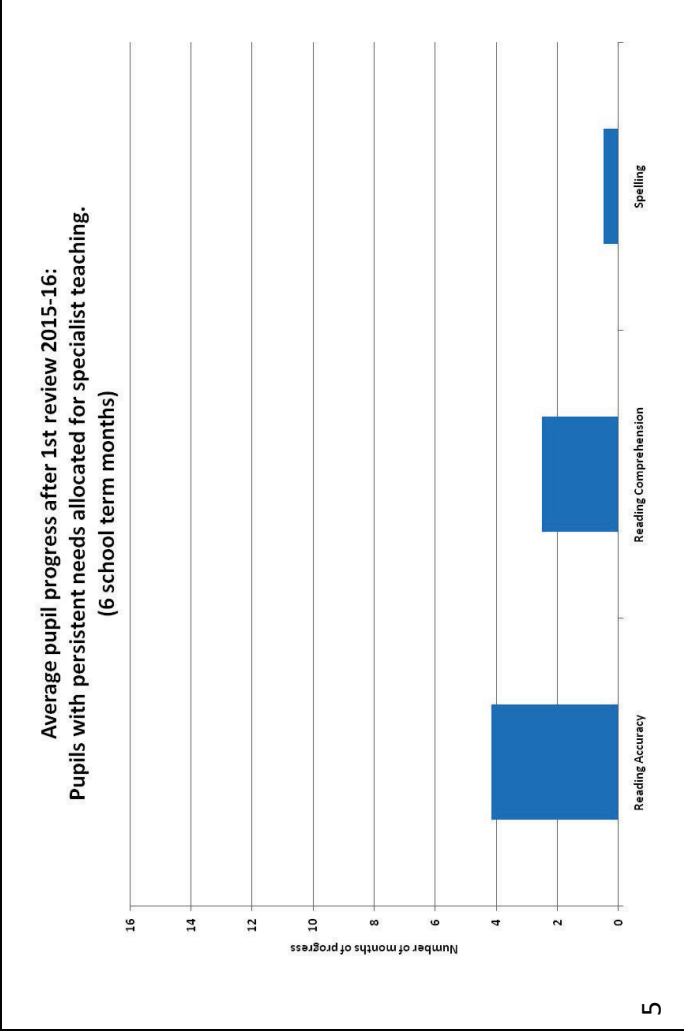
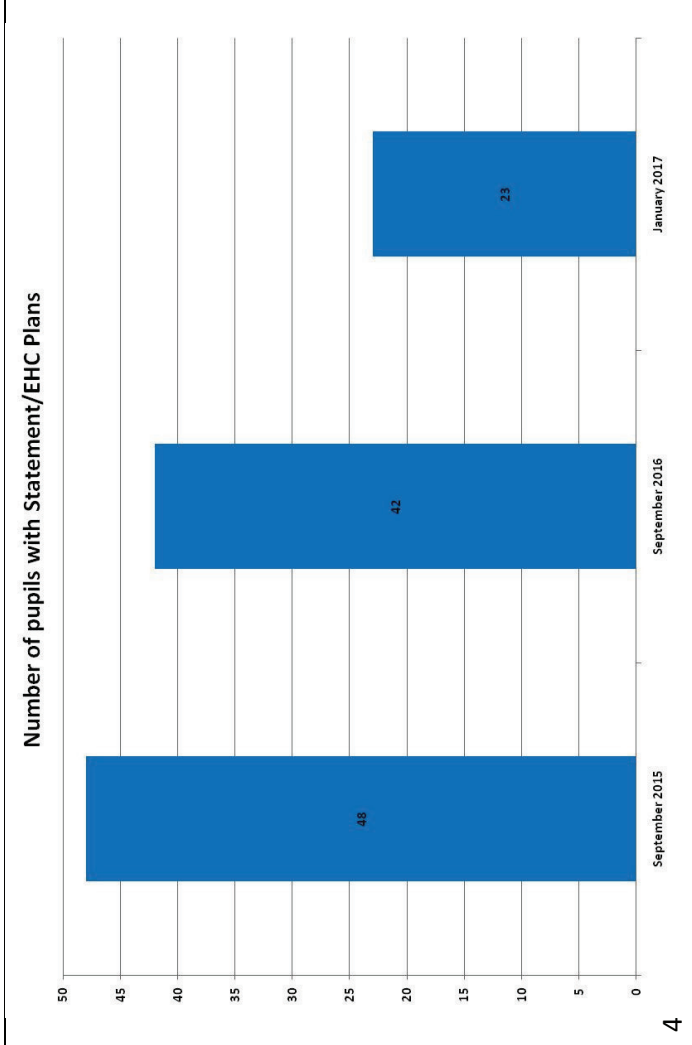
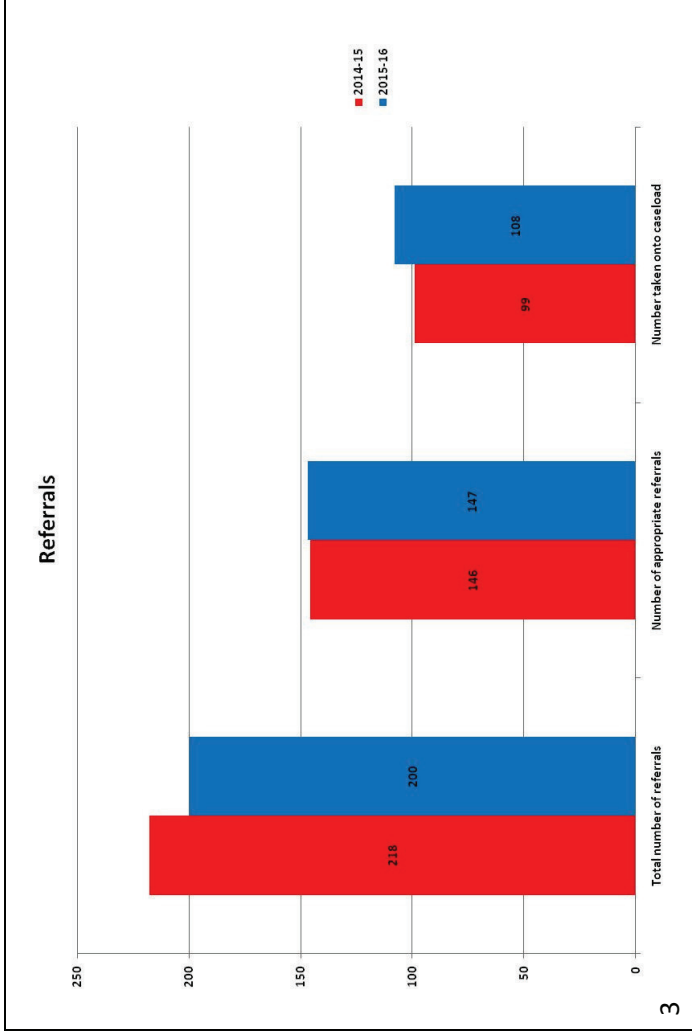


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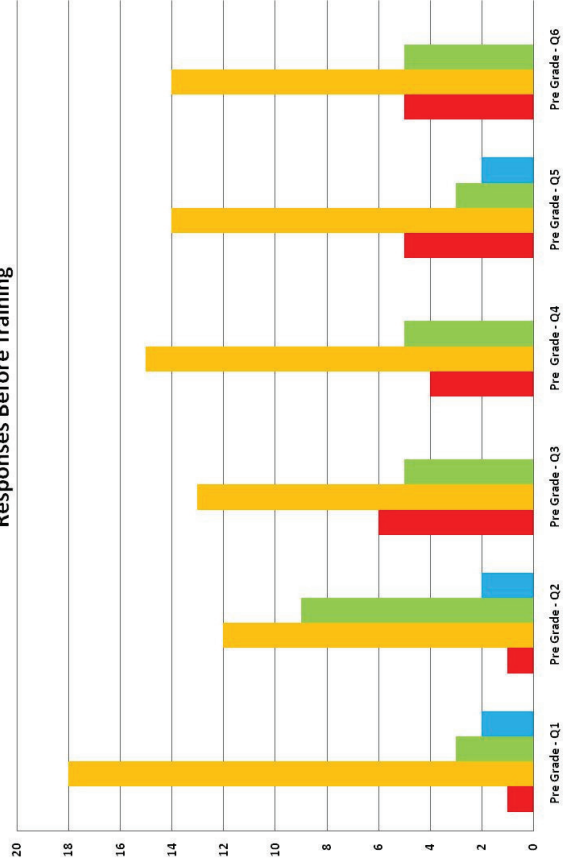
Evaluations from schools following team expansion to 3.8 specialist teachers and review of team systems, standards and procedures.

Statements which schools were asked to respond to:

1. The Dyslexia Team assesses pupils within eight term time weeks of a referral being accepted and feeds back to school staff and parents promptly. **
2. The Dyslexia Team Specialist Teacher contacts the SENCO within 6 months of the previous assessment to arrange reviews of pupils progress. **
3. The Dyslexia Team Specialist Teacher's detailed reports explain pupils' learning needs and outline strategies and programmes to address pupils' difficulties.
4. A teaching intervention programme and resources are provided following every assessment at the feedback meeting.
5. The Dyslexia Team Specialist Teacher provides helpful advice and support for school staff regarding ways to address pupils' specific learning needs.
6. Teaching assistants are supported as needed through modelling of new resources and programmes.
7. A consistent service is provided by the Dyslexia Team.
8. I am satisfied with the service provided by the Dyslexia Team. ** Unless otherwise requested by school or parents.



Awareness of dyslexia and literacy difficulties. Strategies to support pupils with literacy difficulties. 5th September 2016
Responses Before Training



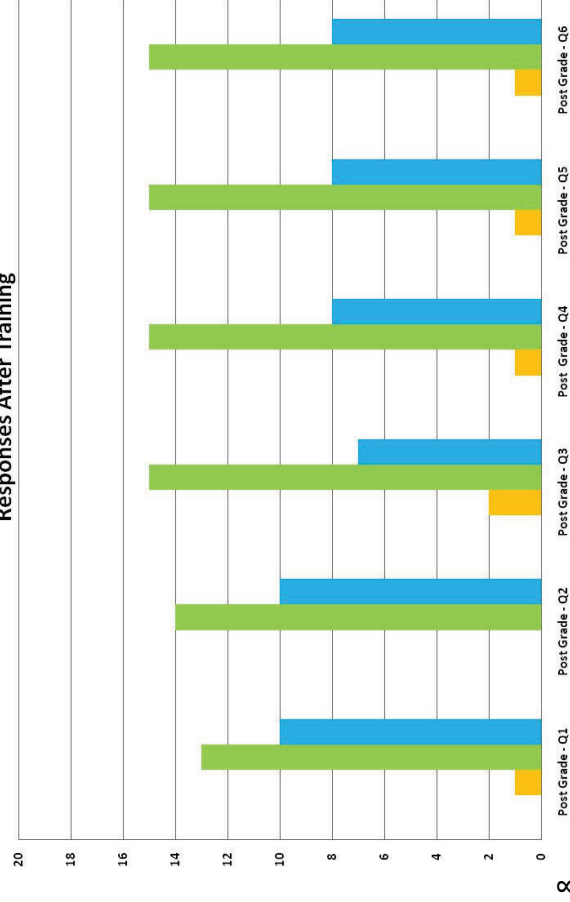
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Impact of Twilight Training

Middle School Staff Statements: Responses Before and After Training

1. I am aware of key characteristics which indicate that a person may have dyslexia/persistent literacy difficulties
2. I am aware of difficulties which may co-occur alongside dyslexia/persistent literacy difficulties.
3. I am aware of the difficulties which people with these characteristics may experience in the different developmental phases.
4. I am aware of ways in which literacy based support strategies can be used in all curriculum areas.
5. I understand what is involved in multi-sensory teaching of pupils with persistent literacy difficulties.
6. I am aware of ways in which ICT can be used to facilitate curriculum access for pupils with dyslexia/persistent literacy difficulties.

Awareness of dyslexia and literacy difficulties. Strategies to support pupils with literacy difficulties. 5th September 2016
Responses After Training

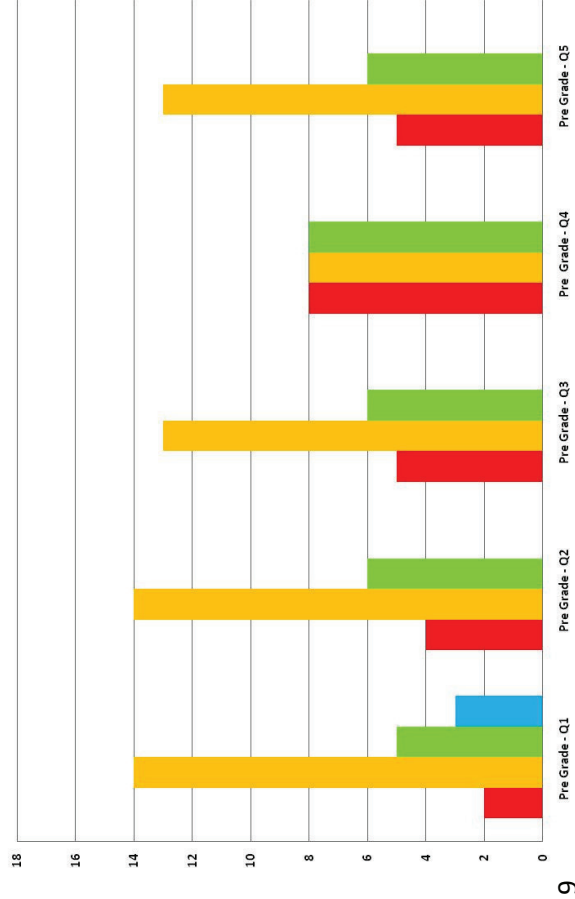


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Grading System for Responses

- A grade of 1 indicates a very basic knowledge and awareness (i.e. an area for considerable further development).
- A grade of 2 indicates some awareness, skill or knowledge, but with the recognition that further development would enhance your confidence level and classroom practice.
- A grade of 3 indicates developing confidence in terms of relevant knowledge and awareness.
- A grade of 4 indicates a higher level of confidence in terms of relevant knowledge and awareness.

Spelling Choices Workshop - May 2016
Responses Before Training

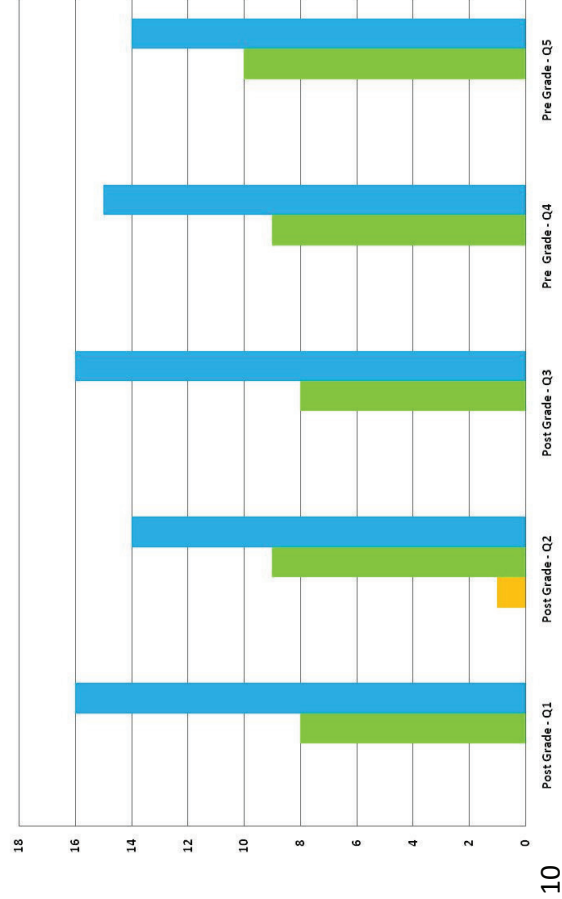


Impact of Spelling Choices Workshop

Delegates' Statements and Responses Before and After Training

1. I understand difficulties of the English language in relation to spelling choices for long vowel patters.
2. I am aware of a range of spelling tips to support choices of long vowel patterns.
3. I am aware of ways to support memory when choosing spellings for long patterns.
4. I am aware of multi-sensory strategies to support recall of spelling choices.
5. I am aware of ways in which strategies to support spelling choices can be transferred into the classroom.

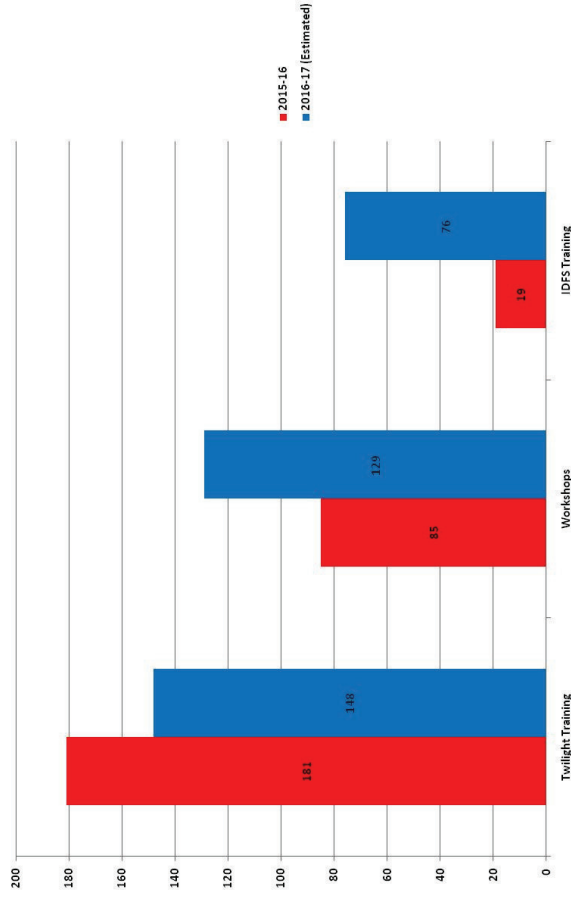
Spelling Choices Workshop - May 2016
Responses After Training



Grading System for Responses

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Numbers who have received training

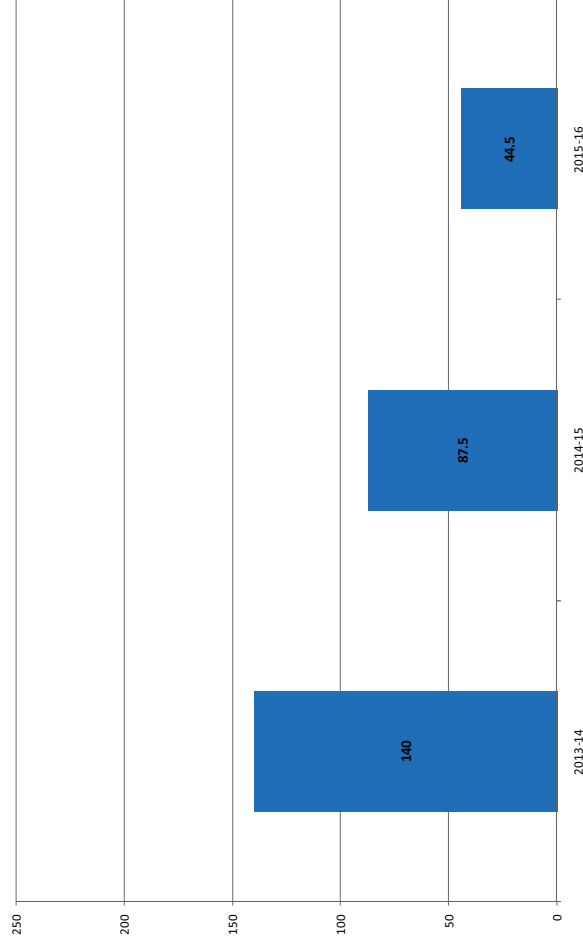


Training provided by the Dyslexia Team for School Staff

These charts show training delivered by the Dyslexia Team during 2015-16 and estimated training numbers for 2016-17. The estimates for numbers of staff trained in 2016-2017 are based on training which has already taken place during the Autumn term and staff numbers and confirmed bookings for the Spring and Summer terms. By July 2017, a total of at least 638 school staff will have received training from the Dyslexia Team over a 2 year period.

Based on confirmed bookings

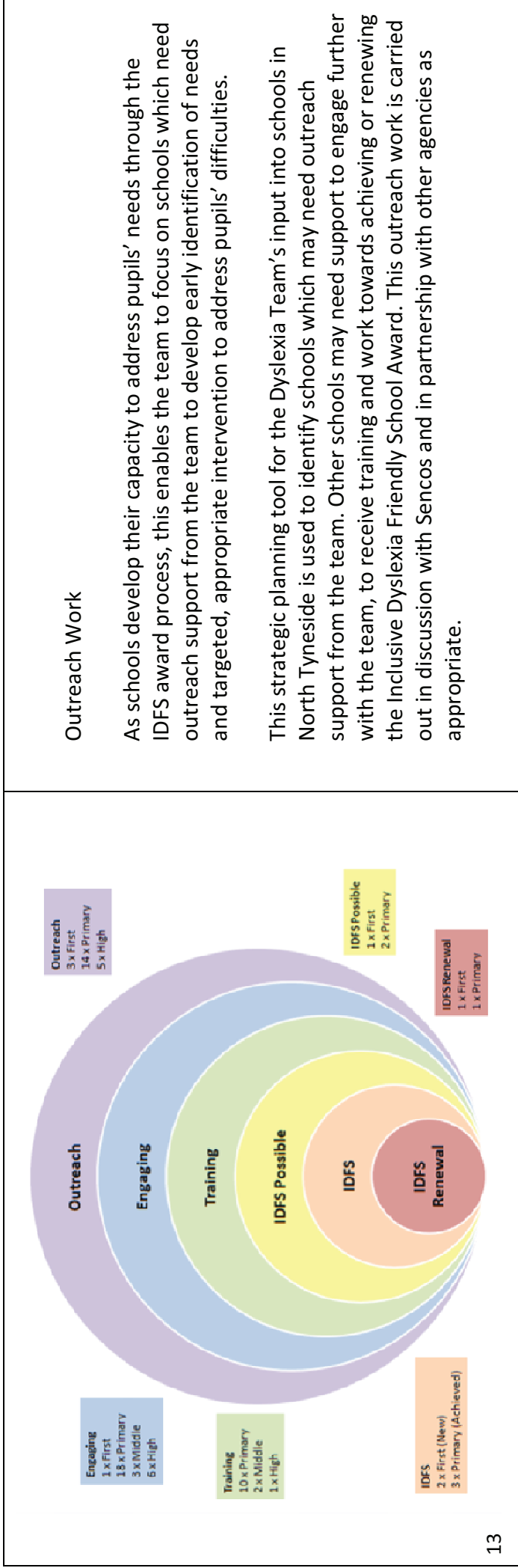
IDFS Impact 2015-16



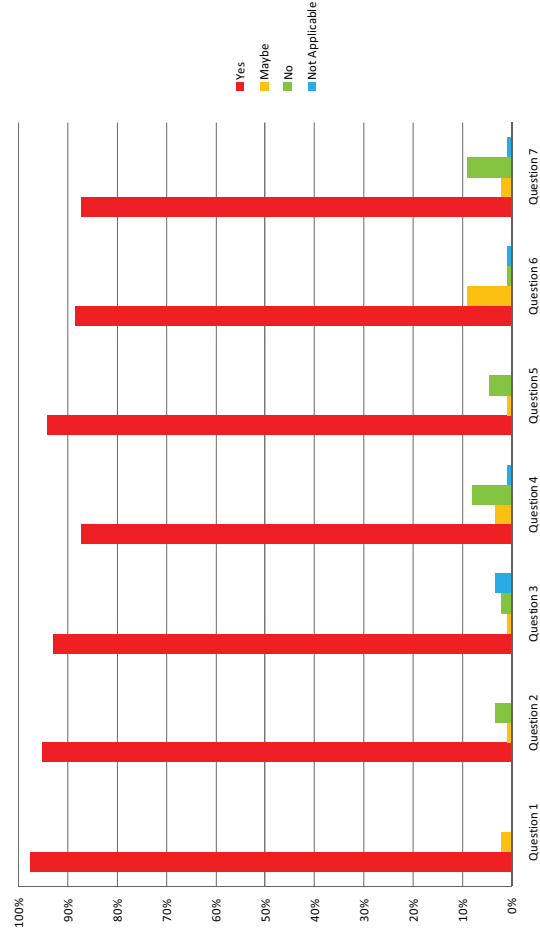
Capacity Building Impact of the Inclusive Dyslexia Friendly School Award

This graph shows the reduction in hours spent by the Dyslexia Team in service to this primary school, which began work on the Inclusive Dyslexia Friendly Schools Award in September 2014 and completed the award in July 2016. As the school developed its inclusive approach using targeted intervention and in-class adaptations, school staff were confident to address more pupils' needs in-house. This pattern is reflected in other schools which have completed the IDFS Award.





Primary pupils' views about their progress after following the Dyslexia Team's Programme 2015-2016



Primary Pupils' Views About Their Progress

1. I think my parents and my teachers know how to help me now with the things I find difficult.
2. I think the special programmes and extra help I am getting have made a difference to my reading.
3. I think the special programmes and extra help I am getting have made a difference to my spelling.
4. I think the special programmes and extra help I am getting have made a difference in the classroom.
5. I think I am more confident in school when reading and writing than I was before I had my test and extra help.
6. I think I have made real progress and that I can do my work with less help than I needed before.
7. I think I still need some extra help to keep making progress with my work in school.

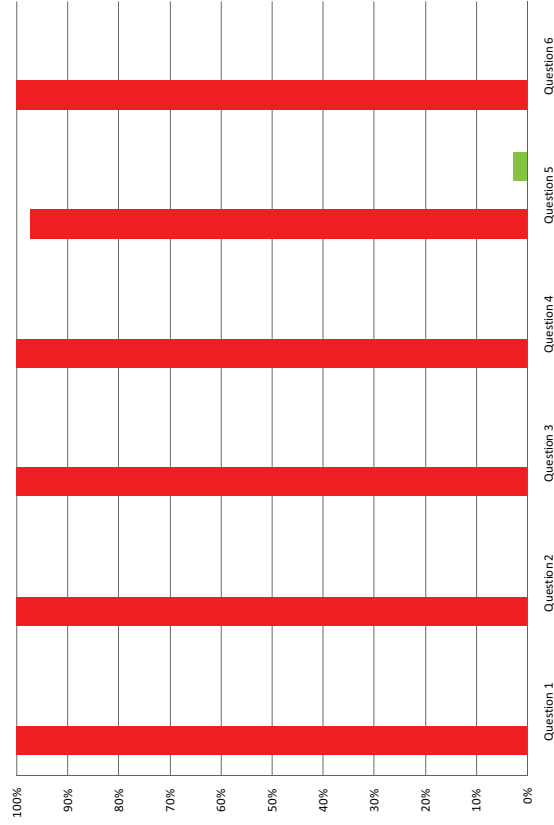
Secondary pupils' views about their progress after following the Dyslexia Team's programme 2015-2016



Secondary Students' Views About Their Progress

1. I think my parents and my teachers know how to help me now with the things I find difficult.
2. I think the programmes and extra help I have been getting have helped me to improve my reading skills.
3. I think the programmes and extra help I have been getting have helped me to improve my spelling skills.
4. I think the special programmes and extra help I am getting have made a difference in the classroom.
5. I think the programmes and extra help I have been getting have helped me to work more independently in class.
6. I think I still need some extra help to keep on making progress with my work.

Parents / Carers' Responses after Initial Assessment 2015 - 2016



Parents/Carers' Response to the Dyslexia Team's Service

1. At the feedback meeting the Dyslexia Team Specialist Teacher explained the assessment report to me and I was given the opportunity to ask questions.
2. I felt that the assessment report was an accurate reflection of my child's strengths and areas for further development.
3. I felt that my child's needs had been identified and that the correct steps were being taken to help my child make progress.
4. I felt confident that I / we could carry out the recommendations made by the Dyslexia Team Specialist Teacher to support my / our child at home.
5. I felt confident that recommendations / programmes made by the Dyslexia Team Specialist Teacher could be carried out in school.
6. I understand that my child's progress will be reviewed in six months to ensure that his / her needs continue to be met.