



New deal for Dyslexia - Government gives 'no to failure' a £900,000 kick start

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Schools Minister Andrew Adonis will today join Kate Griggs, founder of the charity Xtraordinary People, to launch 'No to Failure', an exciting new project that aims to ensure children with dyslexia get the support they need at school.

This unique project, part of a wider new programme of support for children with dyslexia and their teachers, identifies 'trailblazer' schools and local authorities leading the way in meeting the needs of dyslexic pupils. Through these 'trailblazers' the project will:

- champion specialist dyslexia training for teachers;
- develop examples of good practice which can be extended locally and nationally; and
- forge stronger partnerships with dyslexia charities and businesses to provide quality support and education for dyslexia pupils.

The Government's £900,000 will be matched by charitable contributions in cash or kind to launch 'No to Failure' as an independent, managed project. 'No to Failure' will develop an initial pilot project in the London Borough of Southwark, as a model for extension to other local authorities over the coming months.

Launching the project at Lyndhurst School in Southwark, Andrew Adonis said: "This project is an excellent example of how working together with specialists in the field means that the needs of children with dyslexia are recognised early and acted upon.

"Equipping teachers with the skills and confidence to help children with a range of special educational needs, including dyslexia, is a key way of successfully responding to pupil's individual needs. Every child should have the chance to reach their full potential and that is why through our work focusing on school development and personalised learning we are investing £4.9billion.

"This project, bringing Government and charities together, will increase awareness of the benefits to be gained from improved access to specialist support. For that reason we have committed £900,000 over two years to help the project get off to a flying start."

Kate Griggs of Xtraordinary People said: "Lyndhurst School is a shining example of how even severely dyslexic children can be supported and succeed in mainstream school. Success for most dyslexics isn't about specialist schools it's about getting specialist teachers in mainstream schools so they can identify and help these children early. 'No to Failure' will seek to replicate and build on the Lyndhurst experience in other schools and local authorities."

'No to Failure' is part of a transformation programme the Government is taking forward with the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) to improve systematically the training of trainee and serving teachers in special educational needs. This includes pilots in nine universities of specialist sessions for trainee primary schools teachers for teaching pupils with SEN.

Graham Holley, Chief Executive of the TDA said: "The TDA's Special Educational Needs and Disability Programme is a key part of the Government's SEN strategy Removing Barriers to Achievement. The programme will provide support for trainee teachers, serving teachers and trainers of teachers to develop their skills and personalise learning for pupils with SEN and disabilities. As part of the programme materials are being piloted in a number of undergraduate Initial Teacher Training (ITT) courses with positive results. We will share the materials nationally later this year following evaluation of the pilot."

Lynne Cook at Oxford Brookes University said: "I've been delighted to be involved in the piloting of the new SEN and disability units. The units are well designed and highly accessible and they've been an extremely valuable addition to our course. Students have enjoyed them and feel better equipped to work with children with SEN and disabilities when they take up posts in schools. We'll definitely be using them as a key part of our courses in the future and I'm pleased to hear that they'll be available for all ITT providers later this year."

In October the Government is also launching a new £2 million Inclusion Development Programme (IDP) which will enhance SEN training and support for serving teachers and other staff with the aim of developing their competence and confidence in working with this key group of pupils. The first year of the programme will focus on children with speech, language and communication needs, and dyslexia.

Notes to Editors

1. Xtraordinary People operates as a restricted fund of the British Dyslexia Association.
2. All local authorities, schools and early year's settings must have regard to the SEN Code of Practice which provides advice on carrying out statutory duties to identify, assess and make provision for pupils' special educational needs. Children with dyslexia should therefore have their needs identified and support put in place to meet those needs in the same way as children with any other type of SEN.
3. There is substantial funding in the school system to support training. Some £4.9bn has been made available in 2006-08 through the School Development Grant and funding for Personalisation. This is on top of LAs' planned annual expenditure on SEN - £4.5 billion in 2006-07.
4. Nine institutions are involved in the Initial Teacher Training pilots. They are University of Chichester, University of Derby, Edge Hill University, University of Gloucestershire, University of Greenwich, Oxford Brookes University, University of Reading, St Martin's College and Northumbria University.

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