A meeting of the Cross-Party Group on Dyslexia took place on Tuesday 14th November 2006 at 2 pm at the Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
CROSS-PARTY GROUP ON DYSLEXIA

1. Welcome and Apologies

Rosemary welcomed all to the meeting and gave apologies - see attached list.

2. Minutes of Last Meeting

The previous Minutes were accepted as a true reflection of the meeting:

- Proposed by Moira Thomson
- Seconded by Adam Hannah

3. Appointment of Office Bearers

Two office bearers were appointed.

Secretary: Moira Thomson
Treasurer: Meg Houston

Rosemary Byrne suggested that it would be good to have someone else to help co-chair Sub-group meetings as and when these are required. Adam Hannah was asked if he would be prepared to do this and he agreed.

4. Feedback from Sub-Group by Adam Hannah

Prior to Adam Hannah giving feedback Rosemary Byrne announced that Peter Peacock had resigned his position as Education Minister on health grounds.
Sharon Duncan confirmed that a meeting was arranged for the Group to meet with Robert Brown MSP on the 11th December 2006 at 2 pm.

Adam Hannah then proceeded through the set of questions that he had prepared. After some general discussion over the questions to be put to the Minister it was agreed that Adam Hannah would liaise with Moira Thomson, the new secretary, to finalise the wording in the context of current legislation and confirm the final draft with Dr. Anna McGee, Fran Ranaldi and Rosemary Byrne.

Once the list of questions has been confirmed it is to be circulated to all members of the full Cross-Party Group. If everyone is in agreement with the questions the list can then be forwarded to the Minister so that he will have these in sufficient time to prepare for the meeting.

Sir Crispin Agnew suggested that the Group might need to provide papers to the Minister to back up any points or statistics the Group wished to make.

The structure of the meeting with the Minister was discussed. It was suggested that it should take the following form:

- A powerpoint introduction about the Group and its aims.
- Two case studies available to provide their experiences.
- The prepared questions to be put to the Minister.

It was suggested that a light buffet and refreshments be made available to encourage other MSPs to come along to meet the Group.

There were other points raised during the discussion, particularly teacher training. Pamela Deponio recounted information she had picked up whilst carrying out research on transition from Primary to Secondary School. She found that subject teachers do not see it as their job to deal with dyslexia and therefore do not turn out for in-service training on the subject.

The importance of accountability was an issue on which everyone agreed. It was felt by all that there is a lack of accountability in who should be doing what, when, how and why. No one seems to be checking on whether the legal framework, recently introduced, is being adhered to or even followed.

Sir Crispin Agnew suggested that we show the Minister the cost of not providing adequate support to dyslexic children. For example he suggested that presenting statistics such as 25% of the male prison population being dyslexic - the implicated costs would be obvious.

Joe Moran suggested if we do use statistics the Group must be very careful to use only reliably-researched figures.
5. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

6. Speaker

Rosemary Byrne introduced the Speaker for the day. Liz Mckelvie, representing East Renfrewshire Council, had agreed at very short notice to give a presentation on The Dyslexia Friendly Schools Award. Please find attached a copy of her presentation.

After Liz's presentation Rosemary Byrne asked if anyone had questions they would like to ask Liz about The Dyslexia Friendly Schools Award.

Jim Connelly asked Liz how she had broken down the barriers.

Liz explained that at first teachers appeared to lack knowledge of dyslexia. When training was provided it was given in such a way that seasoned teachers felt they could actively take part. This helped break the barriers down.

Glenda Hanna asked about schools using different assessment tools and doing things in different ways. She wanted to know how Liz could determine if schools were meeting the standards set out in The Dyslexia Friendly Schools Award.

Liz said that sometimes schools don't meet the standards. She explained that some assessments sit well with each other and that each school is looked at individually. Where schools have been using a particular assessment tool for a period of time and it meets the standards required, it would not be right to tell the school to stop using it in preference of another they have no experience of. It is a matter of being flexible.

Meg Houston asked about the touch-typing programmes that are used and if there was a variety. Liz said that from Primary 4 upwards they use Type to Learn.

Liz said she would send a copy of the criteria for Primary and Secondary Schools to Sharon who would distribute this to everyone.

Rosemary Byrne thanked Liz for her fantastic talk. She said it was an excellent insight into what is happening in East Renfrewshire and extremely empowering. She said that it was very refreshing to hear of such positive work.

Rosemary also commented that Allan Cowieson from North Ayrshire Council, who attends the Cross-Party Group regularly, is holding a seminar in February for teachers. She said she is delighted to see this progress and that the Group is having a very positive influence with some authorities.
It had been hoped to have HMIE speak to the Group today but unfortunately they were unable to do so. Rosemary Byrne will liaise with Moira Thomson to arrange for them to speak to the group early next year.

7. **Any Other Business**

**Transition Dyslexia**
Pamela Deponio gave an overview of this project which is being funded by the Scottish Executive and managed by Dyslexia Scotland. It covers the transition period between Primary 7 and S1. The project involves 2 secondary schools with their "clusters" of primary schools within 5 separate local authorities. The project looks at the whole process of transition including aspirations for high school. The Project will be launched in March 2007 and should be ready to show at the next Cross-Party Group meeting.

The meeting ended at 4.10 pm.

Sharon Duncan
Minutes Secretary
Cross-Party Group Dyslexia
14 November 2006
14th November

Attending:
Rosemary Byrne MSP
Adam Ingram MSP
Mary Evans (Dyslexia Scotland)
Marie Lockhart (National Co-ordinator - Dyslexia Scotland)
Liz McKelvie (East Renfrewshire)
Bill Sadler (Co-operative Solutions)
Pamela Deponio (Edinburgh University)
Joe Moran (Army Education Unit - Edinburgh)
Dr. Catriona Collins (Educational Psychologist)
Mani Rao (Speech & Language Therapist)
Meg Houston (City of Edinburgh Council)
Dr. Anna McGee (Glasgow Caledonian University)
Sir Crispin Agnew of Lochnaw (QC)
Glenda Hanna (Dyslexia Ayrshire)
James Connelly (Dyslexia Ayrshire)
Adam Hannah (Dyslexia Ayrshire)
Rosemary Hannah (Dyslexia Ayrshire)
Elizabeth Bingham (Dyslexia Ayrshire)
Margaret Watson (Learning Teaching Scotland)
Sheena Teague (Dyslexia Scotland South East)
Moira Thomson (Cross-Party Group Secretary)
Martin Davies (Dyslexia Forth Valley)
Sharon Duncan (Minute Secretary - Dyslexia Scotland)

Apologies:
Mark Ballard MSP
Elaine Smith MSP
Sir Jackie Stewart
Dr. Margaret Crombie (Dyslexia Scotland)
Allan Cowieson (North Ayrshire Council)
Linda Kerr (Dyslexia Lanarkshire)
Fiona Dickinson (Dyslexia Southwest Scotland)
Katy Mcfarlane (Child Law Centre)
Aileen Macdonald (Apex Scotland)
Alasdair Andrew (Dyslexia Scotland South East)
Sue Bullen
Kirsty Gilbert (Speech and Language Therapist)
Patricia Macdonald (Scottish Qualifications Authority)
Kathleen Clark (Strathclyde University)
Debbie Anderson
Robert Shaw (Dyslexia Ayrshire)
Duncan Cumming (Dyslexia Scotwest)