

Manx Dyslexia Association

Chairman's Report - November 22nd 2018

A summary of the MDA's work over the past year.

The year started off with a request from Andreas School, for Barrington Stokes books. This was accepted and books were purchased with MDA funds. The RGS librarian asked for an additional set of books. The MDA offered a grant to top up her books, instead of funding a complete set, and said the situation would be kept under review. Scoill Jubilee contacted Sue Rutter, requesting a donation of Barrington Stokes Books; this was also granted by the Committee. Books were also donated to Kewaigue School.

In March the MDA held a workshop at Ramsey Town Hall, The venue was good and with much local promotion by Hayley, the event was reasonably well attended. The usual format of sessions was offered, Mind Mapping and ICT run by Sue Rutter and Dr Helen Newbery. The rest of the team answered questions and demonstrated materials to support Maths and Literacy. Their time and support was much appreciated.

Chrissie had been able to meet with Jooles Morrison, who agreed to rename the Facebook page to Manx Dyslexia Forum. She wanted to keep the contacts list for the page as she had put so much effort into setting it up and had always intended it to be a forum. She said she would advertise the Manx Dyslexia Association Official Facebook page to help thye MDA build up its own list of followers. She also said she would advertise MDA activities and events on her page. Jo Cannell administers the MDA Facebook Group.

General Data Protection Legislation (GDPR) was to be introduced by the Manx government, so the Committee looked into what impact it might have on the charity. Chris Seaward was able to draft a document that was presented to the Committee, which stated the MDA's responsibilities in regards to data protection and privacy. The Committee voted to adopt the document and abide by its contents.

The largest event this year was the visit by Dr Gavin Reid, an internationally renowned and published Educational Psychologist. Dr Reid delivered training to around 150 teachers from Primary and Secondary schools, as well as delivering a separate information session to parents. His visit was well received by teachers and parents alike. The Committee felt that he was one of the better speakers that they had sponsored to come to the Island. He has offered to return to the Island, to offer private assessments. As he may also be bringing Dr Jennie Guise, there may be some scope for additional training.

The Future

The MDA continues to have a poor level of interest from the broader community, in the work being done. This lack of support was mentioned in a radio interview and in the local newspaper, but with no discernible increase in interest from those affected by dyslexia or from the general public. The Committee will continue to look at ways to move forward, encouraging more support for its work, while supporting those with dyslexia, families and teachers.

In Conclusion

The work of individuals on the Committee is much appreciated. Chris Seaward goes well beyond her role as Treasurer by taking on a wide variety of tasks as they arise. Sue Rutter continues to be a key source of information and support for both the Committee and parents, who send in questions through the Website or Facebook Group. Dr Helen Newbery supports the MDA, giving freely of her professional advice (including her knowledge of schools and government processes) and her time, despite the many calls on it. Jo Cannell has continued to effectively administer the Facebook Page and help with printing requirements; for which Dave must also be thanked. Hayley McVicar has been extremely helpful, always willing to contribute time and effort to all that we do. I would like to thank each and every one of the Committee for being instrumental in turning ideas into realities.

Chrissie Watson
Chairman
Manx Dyslexia Association