

Helen Arkell



Dyslexia Charity

Thank you

Your support makes a real difference, a difference to people like Robin...



School was never easy for Robin; he couldn't read and words seemed impossible. Towards the end of primary school, a specialist teacher introduced him to Dr Zeus and suddenly the penny dropped - he could read! Secondary school was tough though.

With no extra help and being bullied, Robin couldn't get out of there quick enough, but work was a different ball game. Being a conscientious, hard worker was appreciated and Robin was soon promoted to foreman at a factory. A career in gardening with his brother followed.

But Robin developed serious back problems. Eventually, his doctor told him to give up gardening and get an office job. As long as he had been able to rely on his physical strength, Robin had got by. As soon as that was taken away, he didn't know what on earth he was going to do.

Robin went to the Citizens Advice Bureau and was told he would need evidence of his dyslexia for the job centre but being out of work he couldn't afford it. This is when Robin asked the Helen Arkell Dyslexia Charity for help. Robin found our specialist assessment explained so much about himself, saying, 'knowing the

problem is part of the solution'. His wife, Sue, said the assessment 'did so much for Robin's emotional stress and depression, putting his mind at rest that he can do things.'

Finding work with a local charity, Robin got real satisfaction knowing he was helping others. He feels much more confident about the future, knowing he can change and do different things should life change direction.

James



James started coming to Helen Arkell for one-to-one tuition after finding out that he has dyslexia.

He is determined to raise awareness of dyslexia and other hidden disabilities as he feels lots of people don't really understand what these conditions are. James wants to help others by raising awareness of hidden disabilities and how they

affect people. This is why he has become a Young Ambassador for Helen Arkell Dyslexia Charity.

James wants people to understand how difficult dyslexia can make some subjects at school, especially English:

'When I see everyone else writing more than me and getting all the spellings right, it makes me feel annoyed because I find that difficult. It can also be hard to understand the lessons sometimes as I need more time and a bit of extra help. I feel some lessons suit most of the class and not those with dyslexia. Sometimes I feel that people get cross at me when I can't write neatly, and I always get comments about my spelling when we are doing peer assessing.'

While dyslexia can make some things more difficult at school, James is also determined to help people understand the strengths that it can bring. James is especially good at science and seeing things in 3D in his head.

James has lessons with Ginny at Helen Arkell. Ginny helps James with his English work: 'I'm able to understand things a lot more with Ginny. The lessons are more fun and I'm not so tired at the weekend.'

James gives the following advice to anyone worried about their learning:

- Stop thinking about the things you find difficult and start thinking about what you are good at – dyslexia can give you lots of amazing strengths!
- Try meditation – mindfulness can help.
- Do your homework straight away rather than leaving it and worrying.
- Don't listen to people being mean.
- If you are able to have one-to-one tuition it really helps.

James believes that 'even though you have dyslexia you can still achieve amazing things.'

A Helen Arkell bursary can change a life...

'Without the bursary my son could not have accessed this service due to my financial situation. The assessment enabled him to get the extra support and help he requires and for the teachers to be more understanding. It enabled me to get information from the school so I could assist him with home pre-learning. It ensured a ILP [Individual Learning Plan] for him so he is continuously supported. I am extremely grateful for the bursary as it has helped my son access the curriculum more successfully.'

'[My daughter] has more confidence to ask for help and now gets more support to help her to reach her full potential. Before getting her dyslexia assessment she was lacking in confidence and avoided reading and writing whenever she could. She is now being given ways to carry out tasks like her peers but with helpful aids to help her. Thank you so much.'

'The assessment my teenage son had last year has been completely transforming. He was allowed to use a laptop and his grades shot up within a few weeks. He has gained in confidence and self-esteem and the most amazing result earlier this year was achieving a grade 8 in a GCSE he took early. This would have been unthinkable this time last year. It has improved his life chances, his opportunity for higher study and his motivation to study. We are incredibly grateful for the assessment.'

Demand is high right now

We are seeing twice as many applications for bursary-funded support as normal, due to the financial difficulties caused by Covid-19. These include a whole host of children from homes where single-parents or foster-parents are struggling to make ends meet and are frequently in debt. All of these children (and adults) are having difficulties.

We understand that current circumstances are difficult for everyone, but if you are in a position to help, we would be hugely grateful for your support.