

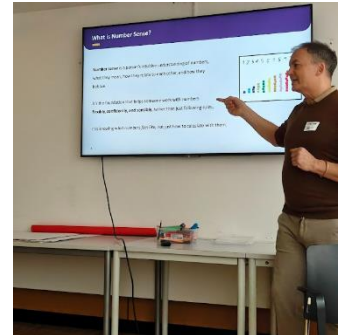
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Attending the Erasmus+ course in Luxembourg City on dyscalculia and specific learning difficulties (SpLD) significantly deepened my understanding of the cognitive and emotional barriers that learners face in Mathematics. The course, held at the International School of



Luxembourg, explored how dyscalculia is not simply difficulty with numbers, but a specific learning difficulty that can co-occur with other conditions and is closely linked to challenges in working memory, executive functioning and magnitude understanding.



A central theme of the course was the strong connection between dyscalculia and maths anxiety. I learned that maths anxiety is acquired, not innate, and is not a reflection of low ability. However, for learners with dyscalculia and other SpLDs, repeated struggle can make them particularly vulnerable to developing anxiety. This anxiety can be disabling, causing reduced or even backwards

progression in learning. Approximately two in every ten individuals experience maths anxiety, and it affects people of all ages. It may present through psychological distress as well as physical symptoms such as nausea, shortness of breath, sweating, palpitations, sleep difficulties or emotional outbursts.



Importantly, the course emphasised that maths anxiety and dyscalculia challenges can be addressed, especially when we respond early and appropriately to underlying learning difficulties. The key strategy of the CPA approach which the



Primary Mathematics Department within the SfCE firmly advocates, was strengthened through another two meaningful terms of “Visualise and Verbalise” by the trainers, Rob Jennings and Cat Eadle, who are both dyscalculia specialists. Encouraging learners to imagine mathematical situations, represent them visually and articulate their reasoning aloud supports deeper conceptual understanding and



reduces reliance on rote procedures. For pupils with dyscalculia, this structured language and imagery-based support is particularly powerful.

Through differentiated tasks, consistent whole-school strategies, early assessment, and meaningful praise, we can create inclusive mathematics classrooms. These were opportunities which we also explored personally and through hands-on experience. This mobility has strengthened my commitment to recognising dyscalculia early and addressing both the cognitive and emotional dimensions of mathematical learning.