

MEDIA ADVISORY

DAS Academy Graduates Learners from All Walks Of Life

Parents of children with dyslexia and other specific learning differences (SpLD) taking positive action to better support their children's learning journey

SINGAPORE, 13 September 2019 – The Dyslexia Association of Singapore (DAS) Academy warmly invites you to its sixth Graduation Ceremony on 18 September 2019, Wednesday, at the MDIS Auditorium. A total of 67 graduates will celebrate the completion of their learning journey in the masters, postgraduate diploma and specialist diploma programmes, an important milestone in their dedication to make an impact on the lives of the children with Special Educational Needs (SEN).

The ceremony will commemorate the graduation of four Master of Arts in Special Educational Needs, one Postgraduate Diploma in Special Educational Needs, 32 Postgraduate Certificate in Special Educational Needs/Additional Learning Needs, eight Specialist Diploma in Educational Therapy and 22 Specialist Diploma in Specific Learning Differences (SpLD).

With rising awareness in the field of SEN, the Academy has seen an increase in the number of sign-ups for its programmes as more individuals pursue a higher education in SEN over the years. The 2019 DAS Academy cohort also registers one of the highest number of parent graduates in the Academy's history.

In line with MOE's move to encourage lifelong learning and making education affordable, the Academy has partnered with the Agency of Integrated Care (Caregivers' Training Grant), SkillsFuture Singapore and the Voluntary Welfare Organisation-Charities Capability Fund to empower more parents, educators and caregivers to possess skills and knowledge to provide adequate support for children with dyslexia and SpLD. Parents of children who are supported by the DAS Bursary Fund can apply for training funds to attend courses.

"It is encouraging to see more parents of children with SpLD taking positive action to understand the challenges faced by their children, become their advocates and help them achieve their fullest potential. DAS would like to encourage more parents and educators to come forward as they can make a significant difference in the learning journey of their children and other children with SpLD," said Mr. Lee Siang, CEO of Dyslexia Association of Singapore (DAS)

"During my 13-year teaching career, I have come across students who have difficulty in reading, spelling and writing. I could never understand why they could not complete such easy tasks and got frustrated or impatient with them. Things changed when I had my first child. He faced similar problems and needed more help than his other peers. He was diagnosed with dyslexia in primary one and that was when I started desperately finding all ways and means to help my child learn, read, spell and write. I then decided to embark on my learning journey with the DAS Academy. I am tremendously thankful to have the chance to develop professionally through pursuing the Specialist Diploma in SpLD at the Academy. I would like to express my incredible gratitude to all the lecturers and tutors who have lent me a hand to get to where I am now," said Ms Dawn Ling, Valedictorian of the Specialist Diploma in SpLD of Class of 2019.

"I am a parent with dyslexia. I am a parent of three children with dyslexia. Twenty-two years ago, I learned that my second daughter was diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and dyslexia. I walked away from my career into a far more challenging and difficult role, being a mother supporting a child with learning

differences. All three of my children have taught me so much about the positive aspect of being successful adults with dyslexia and I have learned so much about myself and my abilities. It has provided me with the most amazing learning journey and taught me that I can do so much more to advocate for children with learning differences and not just my own children,” said Ms Deborah Hewes, Valedictorian of MA SEN of Class of 2019.

It is estimated that there are 23,000 preschool to secondary school students in Singapore with dyslexia severe enough to warrant intervention and about half of these children may experience comorbid disorders such as ADHD, Specific Language Impairment, dyscalculia and dyspraxia – emphasising the importance and need to build upon the pool of expertise in SEN in Singapore for a more inclusive society.

Media Invitation

DAS Academy cordially invites you and your photographer/crew to the DAS Academy Graduation Ceremony. The details of the event are as follows:

DAS Academy Graduation Ceremony	
18 September 2019 Wednesday, 9.00am – 12.00pm	MDIS Auditorium 501 Stirling Rd, Singapore 148951

Join us to celebrate the accomplishments of those who have gone the extra mile to achieve learning excellence for children with SpLD.

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ABOUT DAS ACADEMY

Our Mission: Enabling Excellence

Our Goal: To be a world-class academic institution providing education and research in the area of special education needs.

The DAS Academy is a Private Education Institution (PEI) registered with the Council of Private Education (CPE). Led by a multi-disciplinary team of lecturers with extensive experiences in teaching learners with dyslexia and associated learning differences, the DAS Academy aims to enable excellence through our programmes from foundation to tertiary levels, namely, the Master of Arts in Special Educational Needs (MA SEN), validated by The University of South Wales, UK. The MA SEN enables practitioners working with people with special educational needs or those in education-related fields to develop professionally, and distinguish themselves in the growing field of special needs.

The DAS Academy certificate courses & workshops will provide a continuance of support that children with learning differences receive from our Learning Centres at their schools and homes. The courses and workshops enable parents, caregivers, educators and professionals to learn techniques and be equipped with various skills and tips to help a child with learning differences. Skills that will not only help the child read and write better, but also develop automaticity and fluency in these areas.

The Specialist Diploma in Specific Learning Differences offers a unique opportunity for continuing professional development and is designed to meet increasing demands for higher education in the field of specific learning differences.

Finally, the DAS Academy also conducts customised training for corporations, professionals and educational bodies. Our lecturers have conducted training in other countries such as Hong Kong. Furthermore, training is being conducted to the Ministry of Education's Allied Educators (Learning and Behavioural Support). There is at least one Allied Educator (AED) in every primary school in Singapore and in selected secondary schools.

ABOUT DYSLEXIA ASSOCIATION OF SINGAPORE (DAS)

Registered in 1991, the Dyslexia Association of Singapore (DAS) is today a vibrant social service organisation with over 250 full-time staff who provide a wide array of services for dyslexics in Singapore. DAS Educational Therapists, Speech and Language Therapists and Specialist Psychologists provide support for over 3,500 preschool, primary and secondary school students in 14 centres all over Singapore. DAS also teaches in five PCF preschool centres.

DAS recognises that children with dyslexia and Specific Learning Differences (SpLD) require a comprehensive and holistic range of programmes and services. SpLD Assessment Services, the DAS assessment arm, conducts assessments in areas such as dyslexia, dyscalculia, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), school readiness and many more. The Main Literacy Programme at DAS supports over 3,000 students and provides critical intervention in areas such as reading fluency and comprehension, spelling and writing. Besides the main literacy programme, DAS, through its Specialised Educational Services (SES) Division, also offers support in Mathematics, Chinese, English Exam Skills and Science. Through SES, DAS now offers programmes in non-academic pursuits such as Speech and Drama and Art ventures. Increasingly, DAS will provide support for dyslexics who are also impacted by other SpLDs such as ADHD, dyspraxia, dyscalculia and non-verbal learning differences. Additionally, young adults in Institutes of Higher Learning are able to access assessment and specialist tutoring services.

The DAS training arm, DAS Academy, provides diploma and masters level courses for the professional development of special needs and mainstream teachers and other educational professionals.