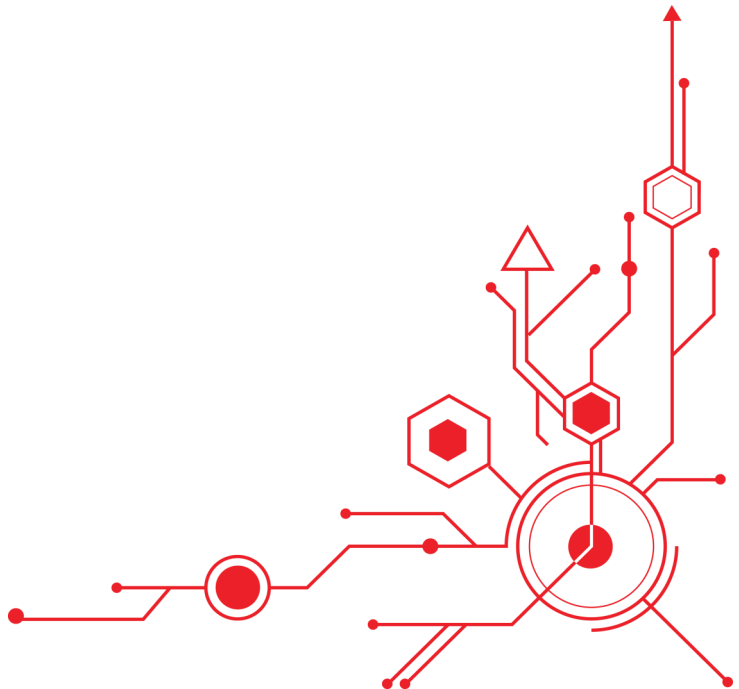




# DAS SpLD ASSESSMENT SERVICES (SAS)



## DAS SpLD ASSESSMENT SERVICES

SpLD Assessment Services (SAS) comprises of a team of Registered Psychologists and Specialist Psychologists who receive intensive training to ensure that they are well skilled to carry out psycho-educational assessments. SAS Psychologists see over 1200 referral cases each year and accumulate significant experience in conducting SpLD Assessments.

Once the child has been diagnosed to have dyslexia and/or other learning difficulties and is found suitable for DAS programmes, the psychologists would then determine the learner's profile. Each child has his/her own strengths and weaknesses which come together to make up their own unique learning profile. For the child who has been diagnosed with dyslexia and/or other learning difficulties and is found suitable for DAS programmes, the DAS Psychologists will differentiate his/her needs accordingly for placement in an appropriate class. This facilitates the DAS Educational Therapist in selecting suitable educational goals that address the child's needs more closely.

The progress of every student is monitored and reviewed by DAS Educational Therapists every six months. After three years, psychologists may conduct review assessments to determine the child's overall progress since his/her previous assessment. This assessment may also determine if the child is eligible for access arrangements for school and national examinations.

The DAS offers a range of psychological assessments that may help to address your concerns with regard to academic, attention and social skills. The difficulties that may be investigated include:

- |   |                                |
|---|--------------------------------|
| ◆ Dyslexia  | ◆ Intellectual Disability (ID) |
| ◆ Dyscalculia                                     | ◆ Giftedness                   |
| ◆ Dysgraphia*                                     | ◆ Visual Processing            |
| ◆ Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)                  | ◆ School Readiness             |
| ◆ Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) |                                |

*\* requires OT assessment*

DAS Psychologists can provide psycho-educational assessments for students (Primary to Tertiary) as well as school-readiness assessments for pre-schoolers. Assessments and consultations are also available for adults with concerns.

# DAS SpLD Assessment Services (SAS)

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## LAUNCH OF SPLD ASSESSMENT SERVICES (SAS)

The SpLD Assessment Services (SAS) as a division was launched in October 2017. It is a new, but not so new “kid on the block”. Why so?

Prior to the inception of SAS, student admissions into DAS, for assessments or entry to our literacy programme, were managed through two systems. First, the former MOE-aided DAS Literacy Programme (MAP) Admissions department had oversight over the enrolment of students into MAP, which is now known as the DAS Main Literacy Programme (MLP). MAP admissions role included reading through referrals from parents and schools and determining whether the child is eligible for MLP, or whether the child would require an assessment to determine dyslexia. All the children who qualify for funding through the Ministry of Education (MOE) are Singaporeans, have dyslexia and attend Ministry of Education (MOE) schools. Should the child require an assessment to query for dyslexia, Psychologists would carry out the assessments. Second, the Specialised Education Services (SES) administrators had oversight of the enrolment of students into the SES programmes and their assessment arm assessed for difficulties in dyslexia and beyond for clients who are non-Singaporeans, and/or who do not attend a MOE school. Enrolment into SES programmes operated independently from MLP Admissions.

“This unified service minimises the possible confusion and burden our clients may face in determining the services they can access at DAS.”

Since October 2017, these admissions processes through MLP and SES into the DAS were unified through the launch of the SAS. It provides a single point of entry for all clients into DAS, regardless of the nationality and school, the type of assessment the client may need, as well as the type of programme(s) the client would like to enrol into.

This unified service minimises the possible confusion and burden our clients may face in determining the services they can access at DAS.

Merging the assessment arms within DAS and broadening the scope of work in assessments enabled SAS Psychologists to provide a one-stop assessment service. Under SAS, Psychologists are able to assess a range of issues which benefits clients in that they do not have two assessment services to consider.

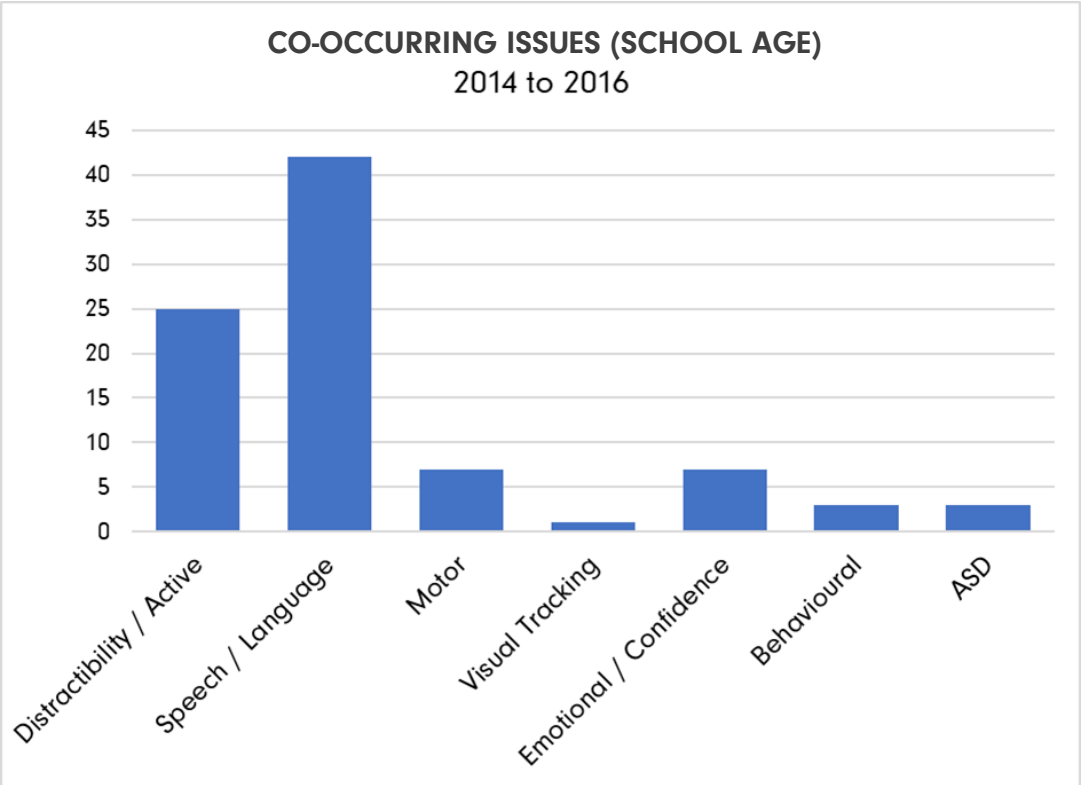


Figure 1. Co-occurring Issues in School Age Children from 2014 to 2016

One crucial observation made possible due to SAS was the comorbid rates with reference to DAS students. For instance, international rates suggest high comorbid rates (up to 50%) such as:

- ◆ 50% of children with dyslexia will meet the criteria for developmental coordination disability (Kaplan et al., 1998)
- ◆ 31-36% of children with Speech and Language Impairment (SLI) will develop later literacy difficulties (Catts et al., 2005)
- ◆ Co-occurrence between Attention Deficit (Hyperactivity) Disorder and Reading Disabilities is between 25-45%

SAS also found, in reviewing applications for programme enrolment and in conducting assessments, a number of students with co-occurring issues in varied areas. This certainly warrants further investigation and highlights the importance of an assessment / identification service that is able to effectively identify all potential needs of a learner so that support/ recommendations can be provided in a holistic manner.

### **SAS... IN NUMBERS**

SAS has continued to provide services to meet the requirements of our clients. This is demonstrated in the number of assessments we have conducted and the increase in student enrolments.

In 2017, SAS received and processed 1590 applications. 762 were for assessments. 240 were placed into programmes. A total of 656 were referred for classes at DAS, which includes 281 from the Ministry of Education.

As a part of our mission to benefit all learners with dyslexia, potential students are given bursaries. As of end 2017, 39.6% of all dyslexia assessment applicants were granted a DAS bursary to assist with the payment of assessment fees.



#### **DAS SPLD ASSESSMENT SERVICES**

[www.das.org.sg/services/assessments.html](http://www.das.org.sg/services/assessments.html)

*Scan me to find out more!*

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS



### **GEETHA SHANTHA RAM**

*Director SpLD Assessment Services, Main Literacy Programme & Staff Professional Development*

*Geetha Shantha Ram is the Director of the MOE-aided DAS Literacy Programme (MAP) and has led curriculum enhancements for the DAS through the Essential Literacy Approach and the current integrated MAP curriculum. Besides MAP, Geetha oversees the Staff Professional Development division and the DAS Research Committee and is also an advisor in the Register of Educational therapists (Asia) (RETA). Formerly, the Assistant Director of the DAS Academy, Geetha trained Allied educators, parents and other professionals and continues to present at conferences, most recently at the 2014 International Dyslexia Association Conference.*

*Geetha has a Masters in English (NUS) and a Post Graduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (Distinction) (LMU) while currently pursuing her doctorate. With over 12 years of experience supporting children and adults in the area of dyslexia, Geetha constantly aspires to provide a quality service to dyslexics that searches for and realises their true potential and provides them with a view to appreciate their own unique gifts.*



### **LIU YIMEI**

*Registered Psychologist*

*Yimei joined the Dyslexia Association of Singapore (DAS) in 2007 with a Bachelor of Social Sciences (Hons) from the National University of Singapore. She has a Master of Arts (Applied Psychology) from the National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University, and is now a Registered Psychologist with the Singapore Register of Psychologists, Singapore Psychological Society. Other than conducting assessments as part of an investigation process for learning difficulties, she is also involved in the training and supervision of new psychologists at the DAS. Yimei has a keen interest in the area of dyslexia and Chinese. She obtained an Advanced Diploma in Chinese Language Teaching from the KLC International Institute and participated in the initial development of the Chinese Programme at the DAS. The research also brought her to presentations at conferences such as the International Dyslexia Association Conference and the International Symposium on Bilingualism.*