



“In addition to purchasing KAZ, we are offering our students the chance to enter for the City and Guilds touch typing qualification which they will be able to do when they are ready.”



With so many pressures on staff and pupils in lockdown and the extra work involved in the move to online learning, you might be surprised to learn that our school has also recently taken out a 50 user school licence for the dyslexia version of KAZ touch typing software.

I am deputy SENCo at Oakwood School, a secondary in Surrey with over 1300 pupils. Many of our students with dyslexia or handwriting difficulties have the use of a laptop or Chrome Book in lessons and a high proportion require a scribe for assessments and exams. It is apparent that some struggle to type quickly or accurately enough; this will inevitably hold them back in the future.

Speech to text software looks promising, but it hasn't really taken off. Children feel pressurised if they have to convert their thoughts into words and dictate them. They also become self-conscious if they think others are listening.

However, we know that touch typing is a winner for children with dyslexia. There is so much research that shows that it develops the muscle memory for letter strings and word patterns and so improves spelling. It also deals with the issue of poor handwriting because with a typed script, these learners can present their ideas as legibly as anyone else.

All of our learners choose stretching targets for GCSE, but with the option of replacing one or two subjects with a college course or small focussed groups tailored to their needs. These include functional literacy, numeracy, revision skills, memory or study

skills. These students will be our first group to learn to touch type so that we are not taking any time away from other subjects.

Those in year 7 have yet to be convinced that touch typing is a skill they may need, but the older ones can instantly see that touch typing is quite a smart skill to learn - and they love the idea of being able to type and talk at the same time!

Learning to touch type means that these students will take better and more legible notes in class and be able to sit exams without the intervention of a reader or scribe. This is good news for us because during the exam season we are drawing our teaching assistants from others that need them, to take on the role of scribe.

Often candidates are reluctant to ask scribes to read the same sentence again or to amend something they have written, so becoming independent in these tasks is a win-win.

Learning to touch type with KAZ makes perfect sense. Not only will they be able to take more control of their exam answers, but they are likely to get better grades. Many exams depend on the quality of written communication which includes the skills of spelling, punctuation and grammar. Candidates can only be awarded marks for this if they can demonstrate that they have written the answers themselves or dictated the spellings.

In addition to purchasing KAZ, we are offering our students the chance to enter for the City and Guilds touch typing qualification which they will be able to do when they are ready. This is a digital badge which they can put on CVs and social media. This is probably the style of many qualifications in the future and will be evidence of an important professional skill they have developed in lockdown.



Jo Wright, Deputy SENCo
Oakwood School, Surrey

Give YOUR students a head start - teach them to type

<https://kaz-type.com>

