Speech and Language Therapy Service in Hackney

Children with DLD in Hackney may be able to access extra support from Speech and Language Therapists and Specialist Teachers.

Who to contact

Pre-school children can be seen by a Speech and Language Therapist in the Early Years Team at nurseries or in Children’s Centres.

Children who are in Nurseries in Hackney schools may be seen by their school’s Link Speech and Language Therapist and can be referred via the school’s SENCo.

Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)

Teacher information leaflet – Early Years

Did you know that DLD is predicted to affect 7% of children in the general population? This is more common than Autism, however, DLD is not as widely known about.
What signs may a child with DLD show?
- Late to babble
- Able to say single words but difficulties putting 2 words together
- Poor understanding of what others say to them
- Hard for others to understand what the child is saying
- Limited use of verbs (verb examples: eating, climbing, painting)
- Difficulties learning and remembering words, instead using words such as ‘it’, ‘there’, ‘that one’.
- Difficulties using grammatical markers such as _ing ending on the end of verbs (for example playing), or adding ‘s’ to mark plurals (for example 1 cat, 2 cats)

How will this affect your pupils?
DLD is a _long term_ condition that can have a big impact on a child/young person’s _learning and achievement_ once they start school.

Children with DLD are at risk of _reading difficulties_ when they reach school age.

Sometimes DLD can affect children’s _social interaction skills_ and their ability to make and keep friends.

Children with DLD often learn and understand better through _visual and/or practical methods_, rather than verbal methods. For example, learning the names of foods by looking at them, holding them and smelling them, rather than only being told the words verbally.

How can you support your pupils with DLD in the classroom?

- _Get the child’s attention_ - say their name before asking questions or giving instruction so they know they have to listen
- _Use visuals and practical activities_ – visual cues (such as gestures, pictures, objects and practicing new topics in practical ways) will help them understand and remember information
- _Use simple sentences and short instructions_ – keeping the information short and simple will help your pupils understand it and remember it
- _Check they have understood instructions or new information_
- _Give the child time_ – the child may need more time to think, find their words and express themselves.
- _Praise their effort_ and _acknowledge_ what they have said, to support their confidence in speaking.
- _Encourage the child to communicate with you_ however they can. Accept gesture, pointing and facial expression.