

Speech and Language Therapy Service in Hackney

Children and young people 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 and young people who are full-time in Hackney schools are seen by their school's Link Speech and Language therapist and can be referred via the school's SENCO.

Our contact details

Speech and Language Therapy
Hackney Community College
50 Hoxton Street
London N1 5LP
Tel: 020 7683 4262
Email: sltinfo@homerton.nhs.uk



Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)

Teacher information leaflet



Did you know that **DLD is predicted to affect 7% of children and young people** in the general population?

This is more common than autism, however, DLD is not as widely known about.

What is DLD?

- DLD stands for **Developmental Language Disorder**. Having DLD means that you have significant, ongoing difficulties understanding and/ or using spoken language, in all the languages you use.

DLD was previously known as *Specific Language Impairment (SLI)*.

- There is **no known cause** of DLD which can make it hard to explain. DLD is **not caused** by emotional difficulties or limited exposure to language.
- A young person with DLD **may also have other difficulties**, such as, Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Dyslexia and/ or speech sound difficulties.
- DLD is **not caused** by other medical conditions, such as, hearing loss, physical impairment, Autism, severe learning difficulties or brain injuries. However, these children and young people with these difficulties may also have a Language Disorder.

What signs may an adolescent with DLD present with?

- Difficulty **understanding instructions** and information
- Limited **vocabulary** or difficulties **finding words**
- Difficulty understanding **puns, idioms, jokes, sarcasm, slang** and **non-literal language**, e.g. Keep an eye on it, give me a hand.
- Difficulty **thinking flexibly**
- Difficulty **remembering what has been said**
- Difficulty **paying attention** in class
- Difficulty **learning to read** and **de-code texts**.
- Difficulty **making friends** and **maintaining friendships**
- Difficulty **understanding and managing emotions**
- Difficulty **telling narratives** (e.g. saying what they did during the day or what happened at break time)

Remember: Language difficulties may also underlie **behavioral difficulties** such as **low self-esteem, anxiety** or **misbehaving in class**.

DLD can look **different** in different individuals and their specific skills may change with time.

How will this affect my students?

- DLD is a **long term** condition that can have a big impact on a child's **learning and achievement** at 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 usually learn and understand better through **visual and/or practical methods**, rather than verbal methods. For example, they may understand a story better if they **watched it being acted out**, or learnt through multi-sensory experience.

Children with DLD may have **strengths in more practical subjects** such as Physical Education, Design & Technology and Art.



How can you support your pupils with DLD?

- **Get the child's attention** - say their name before asking questions or giving instruction so they know they have to listen
- **Use visuals** – visual cues (such as gestures and pictures, acting things out) will help them understand and remember information
- **Use simple sentences and short instructions** – keeping the information short and simple will help your child 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 to said, to support their confidence in speaking.
- **Encourage the child to communicate with you** however they can, accept gesture, pointing, facial expression