

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.

Our contact details

Speech and Language Therapy
Hackney Community College
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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 is DLD?

- DLD stands for *Developmental Language Disorder*. Having DLD means that you have significant, on-going 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 limited exposure to language.
- A child or young person with DLD **may also have other difficulties**, such as speech sound difficulties, poor attention, a quiet personality or behaviour difficulties.
- DLD is **not caused** by other medical conditions, such as, hearing loss, physical impairment, Autism, severe learning difficulties or brain injuries. However children with these difficulties may also have a Language Disorder.

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)

DLD looks **different in each individual child**. The child's specific difficulties can also change as they get older due to the child requiring more complex language skills for learning, in particular for literacy.



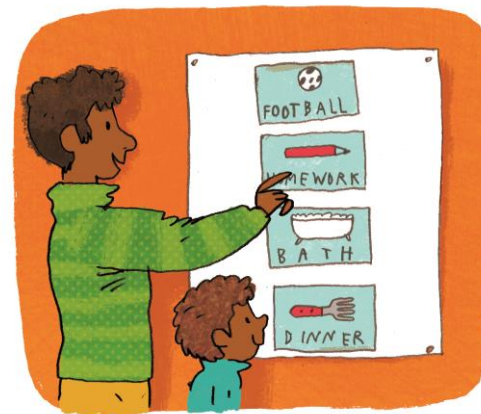
How will this affect your pupils?

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.