

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 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

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Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) in Primary School

Parent information leaflet



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.
- There is **no single known cause** of DLD which can make it hard to explain. DLD is **not caused** by emotional difficulties or limited exposure to language.
- A child 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 a child with DLD show?

- They may not talk as much and find it **difficult to express themselves verbally**.
- Their language may **sound immature** for their age.
- They may **struggle to find words** or use varied vocabulary.
- They may **not understand, or remember**, what has been said.
- Older children may have **difficulties reading** and using written language.
- *Remember:* Language difficulties may also underlie **behavioural difficulties** such as **low self-esteem, anxiety or misbehaving in class**. (Bishop, 2012).

DLD looks **different in each individual child**. The child's specific difficulties can also change as they get older and need to develop more complex skills.



How will this affect my child?

- DLD is a **long term** condition that can have a big impact on a child/ young person'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 often 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 and drew it**, rather than being told it verbally.

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



How can you support your child at home?

- **Get your child's attention** - say their name before asking questions or giving instruction so they know when to listen.
- **Ensure your child can see your face** to support their attention and listening.
- **Use simple language and repeat if necessary** to support memory and provide as many opportunities for them to hear, see and use words.
- **Talk calmly and slowly** to support their ability to process words.
- **Give your child more time to respond** to help them process information.
- **Use of symbols** – provide a picture and/or use gestures to represent new words or concepts to support their understanding visually.
- **Encourage your child to communicate with you** however they can, accept gesture, pointing and facial expression.
- **Check they have understood instructions or new information.**
- **Help them learn skills to join in with other children.** For example, playing games at home to support turn taking and listening to others.