

Developmental Language Disorder

- **What is Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)?**
 - Previously known as *Specific Language Impairment (SLI)*.
 - On-going difficulties **understanding** and/ or **using** spoken language.
 - Language difficulties create **obstacles** to communication and/or learning in everyday life,
 - May co-**occur** with impairments in cognitive, motor or behavioural domains (e.g.) Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD), Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Dyslexia and/ or speech sound difficulties.
 - **Not caused by other medical conditions**, such as, hearing loss, genetic conditions, Autism Spectrum Disorder, intellectual disability or brain injury.

- **What signs may a child/ young person with DLD show?**
 - They may not talk as much and find it **difficult to express themselves** verbally
 - 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**
 - Note: 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 would understand a story better if they watched it being acted out and drew it, rather than being told it verbally.



- **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, 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

