**Language Disorder**

- **What is a Language Disorder?**
  
  o On-going difficulties **understanding** and/ or **using** spoken language.
  o Language difficulties create **obstacles** to communication and/or learning in everyday life,
  o Children with language disorders need to be **directly taught** language skills that other children may learn naturally.

- **What signs may a child/ young person with a language disorder show?**
  
  o They may not talk as much and find it **difficult to express themselves** verbally
  o They may **struggle to find words** or use varied vocabulary
  o They may **not understand**, or remember, what has been said
  o Older children may have difficulties reading and using **written language**
  o **Note:** language disorders 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?**
  
  o A language disorder is a **long term** condition that can have a big impact on a child/ young person’s **learning and achievement** at school.
  o Children with language disorders are at risk of **reading difficulties** when they reach school age.
  o Sometimes children with language disorder will also have difficulty with **social interaction** and their ability to make and keep friends.
  o Children with language disorder 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?

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