

Further information on DLD can be found at:

[www.naplic.org.uk/dld](http://www.naplic.org.uk/dld)

[www.radld.org](http://www.radld.org)

[www.dldandme.co.uk](http://www.dldandme.co.uk)

[www.afasic.org.uk](http://www.afasic.org.uk)

[www.ican.org.uk](http://www.ican.org.uk)

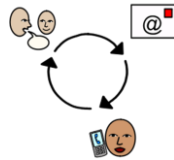
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<https://www.hants.gov.uk/stas>



# DEVELOPMENTAL LANGUAGE DISORDER (DLD)

A Speech, Language and Communication Need (SLCN)  
(previously known as Specific Language Impairment – SLI)

Communication and Interaction Team (C&I)



SCHOOL STAFF INFORMATION LEAFLET

## WHAT IS DEVELOPMENTAL LANGUAGE DISORDER (DLD)?

A child or young person with DLD has **significant** and **long-term difficulties understanding** and **using spoken language** that impacts on everyday life. The condition **affects 7%** of children – on average 2 children in every class. There is **no known cause** of DLD which makes it difficult to explain. **It is not** caused by emotional difficulties, hearing loss, severe learning difficulties or limited exposure to language. DLD can co-occur with other difficulties such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism, Dyslexia and speech sound difficulties.

**It is an 'invisible' disability.  
Many children go undiagnosed.**

### SIGNS OF DLD

Every child and young person with DLD is different and their needs will change as they get older. Some challenges seen with DLD:

- Poor **listening** and **attention** in class
- Difficulty **understanding** and **remembering** instructions and information
- Limited **vocabulary** with difficulties **learning, retaining** and **retrieving words**
- **More time** needed to **process** spoken language
- Using **complex sentences** and **sequencing narratives** (e.g. retelling an event)
- Understanding **jokes, idioms, sarcasm** and **slang**
- **Reading** and **writing**
- **Making** and **maintaining friendships** and **thinking flexibly**
- Understanding and managing **emotions**
- Changes in **behaviour**, increased **anxiety levels** and low **self-esteem**

## STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT STUDENTS WITH DLD



1. **Get the child's attention** before asking questions or giving information.
2. **Reduce your language** by using short, simple sentences.
3. **Use visuals** such as pictures and writing key words.
4. **Summarise and repeat** to check understanding and reinforce previous learning.
5. **Make links between words** by talking about the meaning and sounds in words.
6. **Reduce questions** and use more comments. Offer choices.
7. **Give more time** to process language, find words and express thoughts and ideas.
8. **Model back the child's sentence** and expand on what they say.
9. **Praise effort** and support confidence in speaking.
10. **Collaborative working** and planning to meet individual needs.



If you have concerns about a child in your class who is experiencing significant difficulties with their understanding and use of language, please contact your SENCo.