



What is Developmental Co-ordination Disorder (DCD)?

- Also sometimes referred to as dyspraxia, although the term DCD is more often used now.
- It is a condition affecting physical coordination. It causes a child to perform less well than expected in daily activities for their age, and appear to move clumsily. But it's more than just clumsy.
- Includes 3 elements:

Ideation - coming up with the idea for what to do

Planning - figuring out how to do the idea

Doing - when your body moves.

Indicators to look out for:

- The child has difficulty in planning, coordinating, organising and carrying out movements.
- Affects physical coordination - gross and fine motor skills.
- Clumsiness.
- Can impact on speech because muscles controlling the tongue, lips, jaw and palate can be affected.
- Also affects memory, spatial skills, perception and processing.
- Poor concentration.
- Difficulty following instructions and copying down information.
- Poor organisation skills.
- Actions are hesitant and/or awkward.
- Taking time to learn new skills.
- Difficulty with making friends.

How do we recognise dyspraxia?

- Difficulty running, hopping, throwing and catching, riding a bike, climbing, dressing. The child may not like PE.
- Difficulty in keeping friends, or judging how to behave in company.
- Difficulty sitting still - fidgets and struggles with focusing.
- Poor pencil grip and handwriting, lack of hand strength.
- Difficulty with jigsaws or shape sorting/matching games.
- Very immature artwork.
- A messy eater.

Top Tips for supporting the child (and parent)

- Start each lesson by outlining its content.
- End each lesson with a recap.
- Write down instructions in bullet points.
- Break tasks down into steps.
- Keep copying to a minimum (consider use of iPad and link to whiteboard).
- Put key points on handouts (or on their iPad) and allow pupils to highlight and annotate as necessary.
- Produce worksheets in larger font with clear spacing.
- Encourage different ways of recording, such as drawing, diagrams and videos.
- Use Writing Frames to help to structure writing (The twinkl website has excellent resources for this)
- Structured visual-spatial approaches, such as Mind Maps, can be helpful.
- Allow enough time for reading and writing.
- If there is lots of information on the board use a different colour for each line.
- Intersperse 'listening times' with 'seeing and doing' times.
- Allow pupils to use different coloured pens for writing and underlining.
- Be prepared to repeat and clarify instructions.
- Allow a buddy to support them at appropriate times.

Spelling top tips:

- Writing a word in a coloured felt pen (ideally in joined handwriting if possible).
- Saying the letter names (not sounds) followed by the whole word (e.g. w i d t h spells 'width').
- 'Writing' the word in the air and visualising it whilst looking up to the left at a blank wall.
- Saying the letters as they are visualised forwards and backwards.
- Writing the word on paper again immediately, and again after five minutes.

Reading top tips:

- Try to keep materials within their ability level.
- Allow pre-reading of materials.
- Avoid reading aloud in front of peers (the thought of having to do it causes so much anxiety).
- Try coloured overlays.
- Use a structured reading scheme.
- Use Paired Reading and encourage parents to use it

Motor skills top tips:

- Allow frequent movement breaks.
- Use visual steps - coloured bullet points, post it notes, checklists.
- Mark in their exercise books the starting point and targets.
- Provide exercise books with clear lines or squares.
- Allow alternative methods of recording.
- Encourage touch typing (a valuable life skill) but a scribe might be necessary at times.
- Vary the learning style.

Resources/Signposting

- Solent Therapy Pack
- BEAM
- Clever bodies

Training staff have had in school:

- Kerry Jackson dyspraxia and dyslexia training