

# XXXXXX School

## A Quick Guide to DCD

### What is Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD)?

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Developmental Coordination Disorder (Dyspraxia) is a specific learning difficulty that affects the brain's ability to plan sequences of movement. The effects that dyspraxia has on a pupil's ability to function at home and at school can vary, depending on the degree of difficulty. The pupil may have difficulties with: Gross motor Skills, e.g. general clumsiness or poor balance; fine motor skills affecting handwriting and using scissors; self-help and organisation skills e.g. getting dressed may take longer and they may find it difficult to remember what equipment is needed. Speech and language skills – delay or disorder in expressive language such as in sequencing words within a sentence, or in controlling the movements necessary to articulate certain speech sounds.

It is important to note that DCD is a medical condition which requires diagnosis by a paediatrician or Occupational Therapist.

### Implications for a pupil

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- Have difficulties in sequencing which will then affect their ability to organise and plan their thoughts and ideas for writing. Have handwriting difficulties affecting both the speed and quality of written work. Not know where to start writing on the page.
- Not having the right equipment for a task. Appear to have poor concentration/ attention skills. This is not because they are not attending but because they struggle to screen things out. Require extra time to respond.
- Struggle to get ready for/after PE sessions or to put their things away to get to the next classroom in a timely manner.
- Have low self-esteem.

- Appear emotionally immature and are often awkward or clumsy in their social relationships. This can result in a degree of social isolation.

### How to help – top tips

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1. Consider alternative forms of recording, including ICT.
2. Use of specialised equipment including pencil grips, pens, scissors, and a ruler with a grip. Allow to choose whether to use a pen or pencil (whichever is most comfortable) for written work.
3. Provide ready-made writing frames for tables, axis, spider diagrams, grids etc.
4. Consider alternatives to handwriting and handwriting practice.
5. Use handouts instead of copying from the board
6. Have a separate school bag for PE kit and books, have a transparent pencil case to allow CYP to see equipment needed easily.
7. Use a visual prompt to support sequence for getting changed for PE etc.
8. Teach strategies/ study skills to support organization e.g. making lists, sequencing events, drawing up timetables.
9. Increased time to complete tasks including tests and other class-based work as well as getting changed.

### Further advice and support

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#### Useful Websites:

[www.leedscommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk/our-services-a-z/occupational-therapy-ican/](http://www.leedscommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk/our-services-a-z/occupational-therapy-ican/)  
[www.movementmattersuk.org](http://www.movementmattersuk.org)  
[www.dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk](http://www.dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk)

#### Reading:

Hands on Dyspraxia by Jill Christmas and Rosaline Van de Weyer (Useful guide for schools and parents.)

Caged in Chaos, by Victoria Biggs (Written by a young person with DCD, covers what it feels like to have DCD and what can help. For HS students, staff, and parents.)