



Dyspraxia

Developmental co-ordination disorder (DCD), also known as dyspraxia, is a condition affecting physical co-ordination. It causes a child to perform less well than expected in daily activities for their age, and appear to move clumsily.

(NHS, 2020)

Common signs of dyspraxia:

The pre-school child:

- Is late in reaching milestones e.g. rolling over, sitting, standing, walking, and speaking
- May not be able to run, hop, jump, or catch or kick a ball although their peers can do so
- Has difficulty in keeping friends; or judging how to behave in company
- Has little understanding of concepts such as 'in', 'on', 'in front of' etc
- Has difficulty in walking up and down stairs
- Poor at dressing
- Slow and hesitant in most actions
- Appears not to be able to learn anything instinctively but must be taught skills
- Falls over frequently
- Poor pencil grip
- Cannot do jigsaws or shape sorting games
- Artwork is very immature
- Often anxious and easily distracted

The school age child:

- Probably has all the difficulties experienced by the pre-school child with dyspraxia, with little or no improvement
- Avoids PE and games
- Does badly in class but significantly better on a one-to-one basis
- Reacts to all stimuli without discrimination and attention span is poor
- May have trouble with maths and writing structured stories
- Experiences great difficulty in copying from the blackboard
- Writes laboriously and immaturely
- Unable to remember and /or follow instructions
- Is generally poorly organised

(Dyspraxia Foundation Website, 2020)

If you suspect that your child has dyspraxia, speak to your GP or health visitor, they can refer your child to a paediatrician or a Child Development Centre. The appropriate psychologist, physiotherapist, speech and language therapist or occupational therapist can then assess your child for dyspraxia.

References:

Dyspraxia Foundation website, 2020

Dyspraxia UK website, 2020