

**1** Developmental language disorder (DLD) is a condition where children have problems understanding and/or using spoken language.

**2** It is a hidden condition that affects approximately two children in every classroom.



**4** DLD looks different in all children and can be complicated to understand because we don't really know the cause.

**5** There is no obvious reason for these difficulties, for example, there is no hearing problem or physical disability that explains them.

## DLD

### What is DLD?

**6** We know that genes play an important part in DLD, but there is no medical test to see if a child has it or not.



**7** Scientists think that the part of the brain responsible for speech and language might be wired a little differently from that of a person with more typical language.

**3** A child can be diagnosed with DLD if their language difficulties:

- are likely to carry on into adulthood
- have a significant impact on progress at school, or on everyday life
- are unlikely to catch up without help

# DLD

## Developmental Language Disorder

**8** The features of DLD will vary with age but almost always children will have difficulty understanding spoken language. They may also have difficulties putting their thoughts into words and sentences.



**10** Despite their difficulties with language, children with DLD can achieve well at school, both academically and socially.



**11** Support from professionals, including speech and language therapists and teachers, can make a real difference.

**9** Children with DLD may have difficulties:

- understanding words and long instructions
- finding the words they want to use
- saying what they want to, even though they have ideas
- putting their ideas into sentences that others can understand
- joining in and following what is going on in the playground

Children with DLD may lose concentration easily as all their efforts are spent making sense of the language in instructions. By the time they have thought how to say an answer, the teacher may have moved on to something else.

**12** Double check understanding and go over key words before, during and after your lesson.

**13** Break instructions down into smaller, less complex units.

**14** Use visuals, such as key words on the board, and show students what you want them to do.

**15** Pause for a few seconds between sentences/instructions to allow children to process the information.

