**Dyspraxia**

**Summary**

Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD), also known as dyspraxia, is a common condition affecting fine and/or gross motor coordination in children and adults. DCD is formally recognised by international organisations including the World Health Organisation. DCD is distinct from other motor disorders such as cerebral palsy and stroke, and occurs across the range of intellectual abilities. Individuals may vary in how their difficulties present: these may change over time depending on environmental demands and life experiences, and will persist into adulthood.

It frequently coexists with other conditions such as Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD), dyslexia, language disorders and social, emotional and behavioural impairments. Some people are affected by verbal dyspraxia (also known as ‘childhood apraxia of speech’), which can occur alongside motor coordination difficulties or as a separate condition.

**Symptoms**

* Avoids sports activities
* 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

**Strategies**

* Remember that they have difficulty in taking on board information during lessons. Allow them extra time: teach in small bursts, allowing opportunities to rest if necessary. You will soon become aware when each student requires a rest. However, this will alter from day to day and from student to student.
* Ensure that the student has understood what is being taught and repeat if needed. Check that they are not falling behind because they cannot copy from the board, for example (due to difficulties with repositioning gaze from one object to another).
* Teach on a one to one level, with few distractions, when appropriate. If there is a learning support worker available, allow them to assist the student so they are taught at the same pace alongside their peers. Try to avoid removing the student from the lesson as this stigmatises them, although in some circumstances this may prove unavoidable. In tests, for example, students with Dyspraxia do better in a relaxed environment with one to one support.

<https://dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk/dyspraxia-children/teachers-help/>