



Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)



Did you know that DLD is predicted to affect at least 2 children in every classroom? This is more common than Autistic Spectrum Conditions, although DLD is not as widely known about.

What is Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)?

DLD was previously known as Specific Language Impairment (SLI).

“Developmental language disorder (DLD) is a condition where children have problems understanding and/or using spoken language. There is no obvious reason for these difficulties, for example, there is no hearing problem or physical disability that explains them. In the past DLD was known as specific language impairment (SLI) but recently the name has changed so that it better reflects the types of difficulties children have.” (Source: ICAN)

There is no single known cause of DLD, which can make it hard to explain. DLD can impact on all aspects of a child’s life and continue into their adult life. It may also impact upon literacy development.

It can co-occur with other conditions such as: ADHD, dyslexia, speech sound difficulties.

What signs may a child/young person with DLD show?

- Difficulties understanding and remembering what has been said, especially non- literal or abstract language.
- They may talk less than peers.
- They may struggle to think of the words they need or the sentences might not make sense.
- They may struggle to use and sequence sounds to produce words clearly.
- They may have difficulties reading and using written language.
- Social interaction difficulties, e.g. forming and maintaining friendships.
- Practical activities may be a strength. They may have good abilities in areas that do not involve language e.g. numeracy, art.
- Language difficulties may underlie behavioural issues.

DLD looks different in each individual child and young person. Their specific difficulties can change as they get older and these increasingly impact upon other areas e.g. mental health, literacy.



Use **visual support** such as objects, pictures, signs and modelling what the child needs to do.

This will help all students.

Link new vocabulary and concepts to things the child already knows. Talk about all the aspects of a word – what does it sound like, what does it *look/feel/smell like*, can you draw it or act it?

Comment rather than question. Asking too many questions can be confusing. Model language by commenting.

Check the child has understood by asking them to repeat back what they have to do in their own words. *Simplify and repeat if necessary.*

Help the child to learn **social skills** to join in with other children, e.g. *turn taking games*.

Offer choices to support vocabulary development and to create opportunities for children to use new words.

Model Language. If the child says the sentence incorrectly, say it back the way it should be said. *Don't ask the child to repeat it.*

Extend what the child says by adding a word. For example, if your child says "the pirate is on the ship" you could say "the **scary** pirate was on the ship."

Get the child's attention, before talking to them.

Speak **slowly and clearly, stressing key words.** Give the child '**thinking time**'.

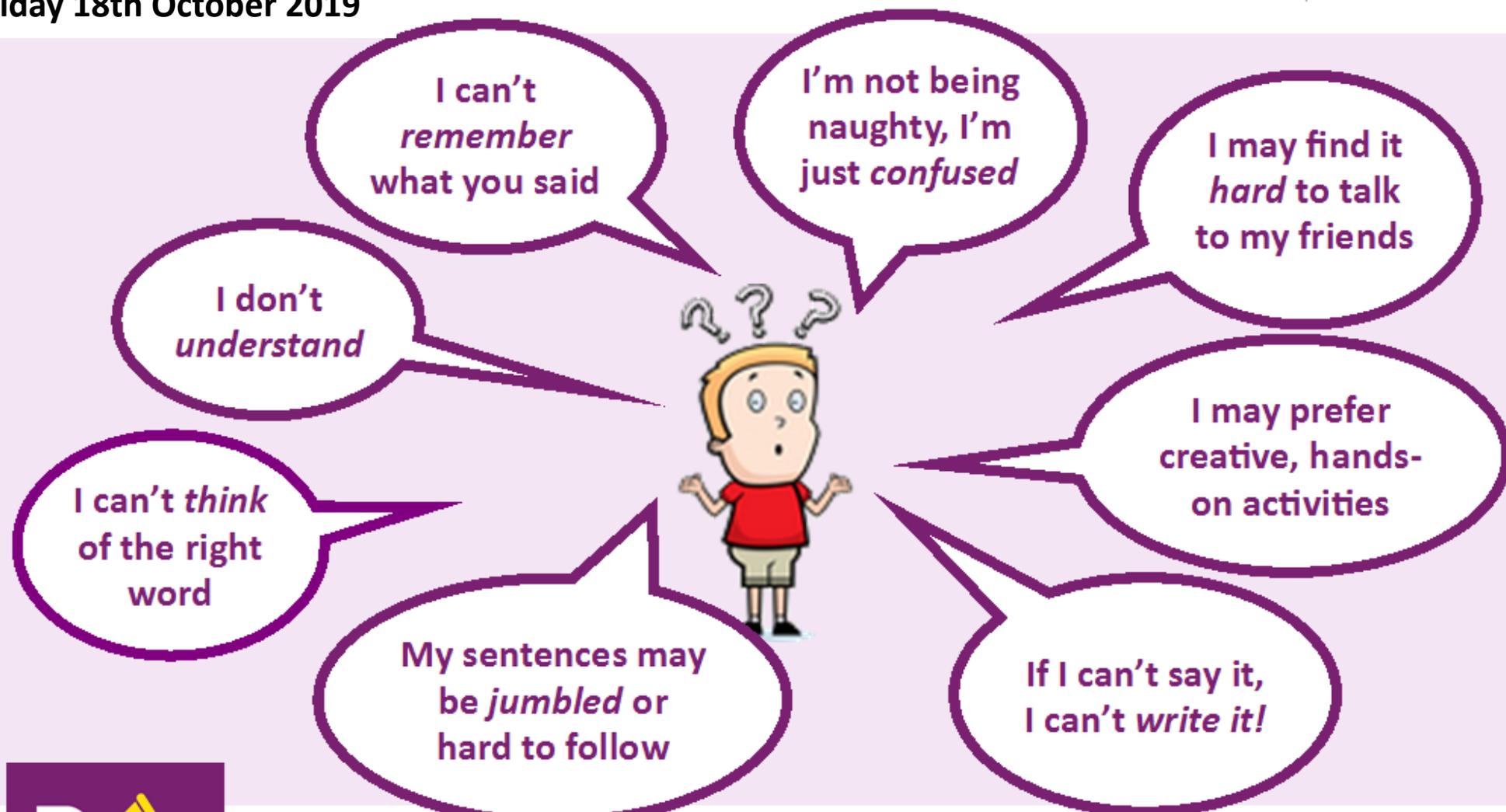
Accept non-verbal communication, e.g. gesture, pointing, facial expression, spoken words.

Simplify your language and chunk information. Use short, simple sentences. *Say things in the order they need to be done.*

If you have concerns that a child in your class may have DLD please discuss this with your SENDCo.

Developmental Language Disorder Awareness Day

Friday 18th October 2019



DO YOU RECOGNISE ME?