

## Understanding Aspects of SEND: Dyspraxia

**1. What is Dyspraxia?** Dyspraxia, also known as Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD), is a condition that affects physical coordination, motor skills and sometimes planning and organisation. It is a lifelong condition that can impact fine and gross motor abilities, making tasks such as writing, tying shoelaces or participating in sports challenging. Dyspraxia is a difference in how the brain processes and communicates movement and coordination.

**2. How can Dyspraxia present?** Dyspraxia can manifest in a variety of ways, including:

- **Motor coordination difficulties:** Struggles with balance, posture or coordination in activities like running, jumping or riding a bike.
- **Fine motor challenges:** Difficulty with handwriting, cutting with scissors or using tools like buttons or zips.
- **Spatial awareness issues:** Problems judging distances, bumping into objects or navigating spaces.
- **Speech and language difficulties:** Delays in speech development or challenges with clear articulation.
- **Organisational struggles:** Trouble planning, sequencing tasks or managing time effectively.
- **Low self-esteem or frustration:** Feelings of inadequacy due to difficulties in tasks that peers may perform with ease.
- **Sensory sensitivities:** Discomfort with certain textures, sounds or environments.

**3. Ways to help manage Dyspraxia** Support for individuals with dyspraxia involves accommodations and strategies to build confidence and independence. Key approaches include:

- **Occupational therapy:** Work with professionals to develop motor skills and strategies for daily tasks.
- **Break tasks into steps:** Simplify activities into smaller, manageable parts and use visual aids or checklists.
- **Encourage practice and patience:** Allow time for learning and repetition to improve coordination and confidence.

- **Provide ergonomic tools:** Use adaptive tools like pencil grips, Velcro fastenings or assistive technology to reduce barriers.
- **Promote physical activities:** Activities like swimming, yoga or dance can improve balance, coordination and confidence in movement.
- **Support organisational skills:** Use planners, timers or digital apps to assist with planning and time management.
- **Foster a positive environment:** Celebrate successes, focus on strengths and provide reassurance to build self-esteem.

#### 4. Where to find out more

- **NHS Developmental Coordination Disorder** ([www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)): Offers detailed guidance on symptoms, diagnosis and management.
- **British Dyslexia Association** ([www.bdadyslexia.org.uk](http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk)): Offers resources, support and advocacy for individuals with dyspraxia and their families.
- Book recommendations:
  - [\*Caged in Chaos\* by Victoria Biggs](#)
  - [\*The Dyspraxic Learner\* by Alison Patrick](#)