

## What can I do to help?

- ◆ Encourage games and activities that are interesting to your child.
- ◆ Introduce new activities on an individual basis, before s/he is required to manage the activity in a group.
- ◆ Try activities that require a coordinated response from arms and/or legs e.g. skipping, bouncing, catching a ball.
- ◆ School clothing should be easy to get on/off e.g. sweat shirts, Velcro shoes.
- ◆ Try practical activities that will improve their ability to plan and organise motor tasks e.g. setting the table or organising their schoolbag.
- ◆ Ask your child questions that help them to focus on the sequence of steps e.g. what comes first?
- ◆ Recognise and reinforce your child's strengths e.g. reading, creative imagination.
- ◆ Choose activities that will ensure success for the child at least 50% of the time in order to build their confidence.
- ◆ Useful websites for support and self management:

[www.dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk](http://www.dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk)  
[www.boxofideas.org](http://www.boxofideas.org)

For impartial and confidential advice or information on the services provided by Bridgewater or to receive this leaflet in an alternative format call our Patient Services team on **0800 587 0562**.

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# Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD)

## Children's Services Information for Parents & Professionals

This leaflet can be made available  
in alternative languages / formats on request.

如有需要，本传单可提供其他语言/版式  
此單張的其他語言/格式版本可按要求提供

Na żądanie ta ulotka może zostać udostępniona  
w innych językach/formatach.

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## Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD)

### What is DCD?

DCD occurs when there is a delay in the development of motor skills, or difficulty coordinating movements, resulting in the child being unable to perform everyday tasks

### How common is DCD?

Estimates vary between 5-10% of the school age population. It affects more boys than girls

### What is Dyspraxia?

Dyspraxia is a subtype of DCD. It is a specific disorder in which there are deficits in planning, organizing, sequencing and carrying out new or unfamiliar motor acts.

### What are the main features of a child with DCD?

You may observe some of the following features:

- Clumsy or awkward movements and poor balance.
- Difficulty with gross motor (whole body) or fine motor skills (using hands), or both.
- Delay in acquiring certain skills e.g. riding a bike, catching a ball, handling a knife/fork, fastening buttons and writing.
- Difficulty learning new motor skills
- Poor ability to retain learnt information – can do a task one day but has to re learn the next time.
- Difficulties in activities that require constant changes in body position e.g. tennis, skipping.
- Coordinating both sides of the body may be difficult e.g. use of scissors, star jumps.
- Handwriting difficulties e.g. awkward pencil grip and poor spacing of words on paper.
- Lack of interest in or avoidance of motor activities.
- Secondary emotional problems such as frustration, low self-esteem and lack of motivation.
- Difficulty completing work within the normal time frame.
- Organisational and planning difficulties

### What should I do if my child is experiencing these difficulties?

For a school age child discuss your concerns with the teacher, school nurse or another health professional for further advice.

For a pre-school child you can discuss your concerns with your Registered Health Visitor.

You may be referred to a Paediatrician and/or Children's Therapy Services for an assessment of the child's needs.

### Professional Roles

**Occupational Therapy** provide assessment, strategies and activity suggestions for home and school. They may also provide individual or group therapy sessions to develop skills through graded activities in a supportive environment.

**Physiotherapy** provide assessment and activity suggestions for home and school where there are predominantly gross motor difficulties. This input maybe as individual or group therapy sessions to promote co-ordination, stability and skills.

**The Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy Assessment may be completed jointly.**

**Paediatrician** provides a medical assessment and make a diagnosis of a medical condition.

The Paediatrician and can also exclude/identify any other conditions and refer to other services as appropriate.

**Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO)** can provide support if your child's difficulty is impacting on their learning at school.