

Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) Awareness Day 17th October 2025

Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) is a term that many people have not heard. DLD can have a significant impact on children's attainment at school, social and emotional wellbeing and employment outcomes.

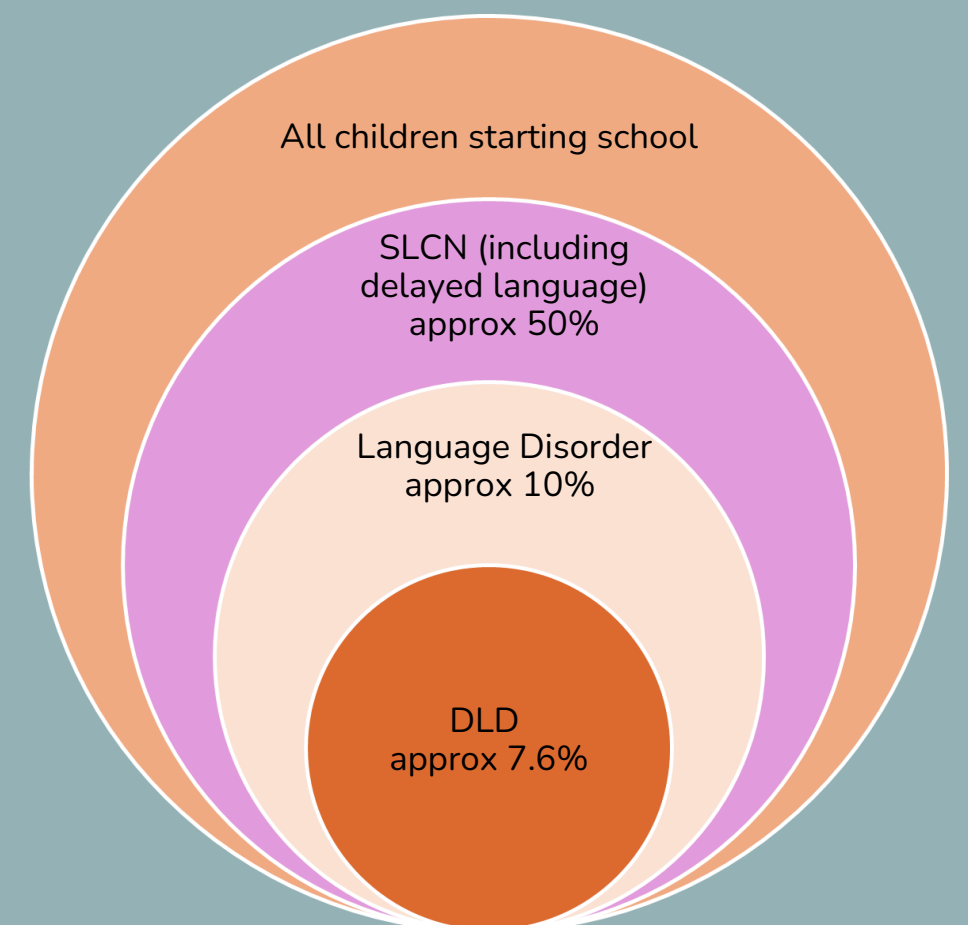
What is DLD?

DLD involves difficulties with understanding and using spoken language. There is no single known cause. The Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists suggests it may be related to genetic, environmental and biological risk factors.

Areas of language development that may be impacted by DLD include:

- Speech sounds
- Learning & memory
- Social language
- Discourse
- Sentences
- Words

Source: RADLD.org



Did you know?

Children with DLD are at risk of difficulties discriminating between different sounds. They may experience difficulties with reading and writing.

Children with DLD often have lower self-esteem (Wadman et al, 2008) and lower social confidence (Durkin et al, 2017).

DLD affects individuals differently and the impacts of DLD may evolve over time.

"All day I am pretending that everything is fine (masking)- but I am not. I am good and quiet and nod - but inside I am screaming!!! I am constantly overwhelmed at school."

Siouxsie, a young person with DLD.
Source: Speechandlanguage.org.uk



Helpful strategies to try

- Please be patient - I need time to think before I answer.
- Sometimes I need you to repeat a question.
- I may be nodding but I don't really understand. Can you check?
- I'm trying hard, I may get tired. I may need a break.
- I find short sentences easier than long ones. Chunk information, giving me one instruction at a time.



- It helps me understand if you use pictures, gestures and signs.
- I may get confused if you give me more than two different instructions.
- Set out instructions visually, using task plans I can look at.
- Model correct language and grammar by using my words and adding on words if needed.
- I may need reminders if I seem to have forgotten what you just said.

Speech and Language Therapists are able to help schools to support children with these communication needs.

For more information:

