

Dyspraxia

What is Dyspraxia and where to find help and support?

Dyspraxia is a lifelong condition which means the messages get muddled from the brain to the body, so it affects motor skills and coordination, balance, and spatial awareness. People with dyspraxia can appear clumsy as they may fall or trip a lot, bump into things, walk or run in an unusual way, and in some cases have trouble with speech. Dyspraxia is surprisingly common in both children and adults and between 5-10% of the population have dyspraxia. Although this condition is not connected to intelligence, it can affect attention and memory so can make school stressful and friendships tricky. Having dyspraxia can help develop very positive skills for life such as excellent long-term memory, focus and determination, creativity, and an ability to see "outside the box". Many successful people such as Daniel Radcliff (Harry Potter actor), David Bailey (photographer of the Beatles and for Vogue magazine) and Florence Welch (lead singer of her band Florence + the Machine) are reported to be dyspraxic.

How do I know if my child is dyspraxic?

You may be noticing your child has difficulties in physical activities such as running, hopping, jumping, kicking, and catching a ball, or riding a bike. They may struggle to dress themselves, hold a pencil, and have a hard time drawing, writing stories or doing maths. For some children it affects how they organise themselves so can show when they get dressed or try to pack their school bag to leave the house. If they don't grow out of these things, then it is possible they could have Dyspraxia.

Who can help?

- Start with your child's teacher or SENCo and tell them what is worrying you. They can check a number of things to see if they can work out what your child finds difficult. They may seek further help from an Occupational Therapist, who can make a diagnosis if it is needed.
- You could talk to your GP about your concerns as they, too, can refer you to Occupational Therapy for an assessment.
- <https://dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk> has local groups offering information and support from other families.
- The best thing you can do is to talk to the professionals and work together to help your child learn and develop.

Where to find out more on website:

www.pinpoint-cambs.org.uk and look under Useful Information