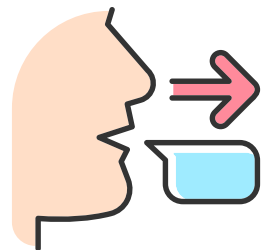


Developmental Verbal Dyspraxia (DVD)

Developmental Verbal Dyspraxia is the UK term for Childhood Apraxia of Speech (USA term.) It is a condition where children have difficulty in making and co-ordinating the precise movements needed to produce clear speech without any obvious damage to the nerves or the muscles involved in speech. This makes it hard for them to produce consonant and vowel sounds and it often takes much more effort and practise to be able to co-ordinate the mouth movements into a sequence that they need for words, phrases and sentences. This results in speech which is difficult to understand, even though the child knows what they want to say and has the language they need to say it (unless they have additional language needs.)

Verbal dyspraxia can be diagnosed by a speech and language therapist alone, although often a paediatrician and/or an occupational therapist will be involved in reaching such a diagnosis. They will look for certain features within a child's speech. These features might include:

- ▶ A limited range of consonant and vowel speech sounds.
- ▶ Overuse of one sound (favourite articulation.)
- ▶ Inconsistent production and unusual error patterns.
- ▶ Breakdown in sequencing sounds in words, particularly as the length of words increases.



If you are concerned about your child's speech development, please get in contact with your local NHS Speech and Language Therapy Service or talk to their school/nursery setting/Health Visitor.

