

# MEDIA PACK



## **Moor House Research & Training Institute**

*part of Moor House School & College*

At the forefront of global research  
and training in the field of speech and  
language disorders



# ABOUT US

## Pioneering work

Since it opened in 1947, Moor House has led the way in therapy and teaching methods for children with speech and language disorders.

Today, the specialist School and College makes a life changing difference to children and young people with speech and language disorders, including Developmental Language Disorder (DLD), with demand for places growing.

Through the work of our Research and Training Institute, Moor House continues to be at the forefront of global research and training in the field of speech and language disorders, taking the benefits of our work out more widely through published research, training courses and resources for professionals.



# OUR TEAM

## Available to provide expert insight and comment

Our specialist team, led by Dr Susan Ebbels, is available to provide expert insight and comment on a wide range of topics related to speech and language disorders from current research and evidence-based practice, to identifying and supporting children with language disorders.

Please see our profiles for further details, including the specialist topics each of our experts can speak on.

***To arrange an interview with any member of our team, please contact:***

James Skitt  
Marketing & Communications Officer  
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01883 719021 | 07841902338







## DR SUSAN EBBELS

**Director, Moor House Research & Training Institute, Moor House School & College**

***Specialist topics:*** *Developmental Language Disorder; Speech & Language interventions; research; The SHAPE CODING™ system*

Susan has worked at Moor House with children with Language Disorders, including Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) as a Highly Specialist Speech and Language Therapist for over 25 years.


Prior to this, she worked in mainstream and special schools, language units, nurseries and clinics both as a speech and language therapist and earlier as a speech and language therapy assistant. She has an honorary lectureship at UCL (where she completed her PhD in 2005) and was recently awarded a Fellowship by the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT), to whom she is also a specialist advisor.

She is on the editorial boards of two peer reviewed journals, the International Journal of Language and Communication Disorders and Child Language Teaching and Therapy.

She is passionate about the need for evidence-based practice and has carried out, coordinated and published many intervention studies on a range of areas, but with a particular focus on improving the comprehension and production of grammar in children with language disorders using her SHAPE CODING™ system. She delivers regular courses both on the SHAPE CODING™ system and on the current evidence base for interventions for school-aged children with DLD.

### ***Related links:***

 01883 719030

 @SusanEbbels

[moorhouseinstitute.co.uk/research](https://moorhouseinstitute.co.uk/research)

[moorhouseinstitute.co.uk/dld-training](https://moorhouseinstitute.co.uk/dld-training)

[moorhouseinstitute.co.uk/meet-the-team](https://moorhouseinstitute.co.uk/meet-the-team)

[shapecoding.com](https://shapecoding.com)



## DR LUCY HUGHES

**Research Speech & Language  
Therapist, Moor House Research &  
Training Institute, Moor House School  
& College**

***Specialist topics:*** *Developmental Language Disorder; Speech & Language Research; Conversation therapy*

Lucy is a Highly Specialist Speech and Language Therapist with over 15 years' clinical experience. Her doctoral research involved designing and trialling a new intervention for children with Developmental Language Disorder, which targets their everyday conversation skills. Lucy was employed as a Research Associate on the Word Retrieval and Development (WoRD) project, a research study which evaluated interventions for children with word-finding difficulties.

As a practitioner, she has worked with children and their carers across mainstream and special schools, health centres and pre-school language units. She also supports student therapists in her role as a Lecturer and Clinical Tutor at Reading University. Prior to retraining as an SLT, Lucy worked as a journalist and television producer, and completed an undergraduate degree in modern languages.

### ***Related links:***

☎ 01883 719035

✉ @hughes\_slt

[moorhouseinstitute.co.uk/research](https://moorhouseinstitute.co.uk/research)

[moorhouseinstitute.co.uk/meet-the-team](https://moorhouseinstitute.co.uk/meet-the-team)



## **DR NICOLA DAWSON**

**Research Speech & Language  
Therapist, Moor House Research &  
Training Institute, Moor House School  
& College**

***Specialist topics:*** *Developmental Language Disorder; Speech & Language Research; Literacy interventions; Literacy and links to mental health*

Nicky works within the team to support and develop research on interventions for children and young people with DLD. She splits her time at the Institute with her role as Research Associate in the Department of Experimental Psychology at the University of Oxford, where she is working on a number of projects relating to children's language and literacy development.

Nicky qualified as a speech and language therapist in 2010 and worked in mainstream schools for 3 years with a varied caseload. She subsequently worked as a research assistant on a longitudinal project examining the relationship between reading and vocabulary in adolescents. She completed her PhD at Royal Holloway, University of London in 2019, and joined the University of Oxford as a postdoctoral researcher.

Nicky's research interests include morphology and the links between language and areas such as literacy and mental health, and she is looking forward to working with the team to develop evidence-based interventions to support children with DLD in these areas.

### ***Related links:***

[\*moorhouseinstitute.co.uk/research\*](https://moorhouseinstitute.co.uk/research)

[\*moorhouseinstitute.co.uk/meet-the-team\*](https://moorhouseinstitute.co.uk/meet-the-team)



## SUE MARR

**Trainer, Moor House Research & Training Institute, Moor House School & College**

***Specialist topics:*** *Developmental Language Disorder (identifying the signs and strategies to support);*

An experienced teacher in both mainstream and SEN settings, Sue began her career in a mainstream school and in 1996 started working for the London Borough of Bromley as KS2 specialist teacher in both their language units.

It was here that she began supporting pupils with DLD. Sue worked closely with Speech & Language Therapists (SLTs) to deliver specialist language teaching and supported pupils' re-integration into mainstream classes.

In 2006, she joined the teaching staff at Moor House and has extensive experience of devising and delivering a mainstream curriculum that has been highly differentiated for the language needs of the pupils in her class. She has worked closely alongside speech and language therapists for many years to ensure that speech and language therapy can be integrated throughout the curriculum using a range of specialist systems.

In 2019, Sue was seconded to the Institute as a trainer to develop a range of courses for mainstream schools.

### ***Related links:***

[moorhouseinstitute.co.uk/research](https://moorhouseinstitute.co.uk/research)

[moorhouseinstitute.co.uk/meet-the-team](https://moorhouseinstitute.co.uk/meet-the-team)

# COULD IT BE LANGUAGE?

## What is Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)

- Difficulty with expressive (speaking) and/or receptive (understanding) language
- Impacts on education and social interactions
- The difficulties exist without another biomedical condition, such as autism, or intellectual disability.

**2 children  
in every  
classroom  
of 30**

HAVE DEVELOPMENTAL  
LANGUAGE DISORDER



Norbury et  
al., 2016

DLD affects an estimated

**7.5%**

of the population

DLD affects people around the world



no matter the language



# COULD IT BE LANGUAGE?

## Raising Awareness of DLD

There is poor public awareness of DLD, reflected also in low rates of clinical identification and research on the condition.

At the Moor House Research & Training Institute, we aim to raise awareness of DLD, carry out and publish internationally recognised intervention research and develop and deliver high quality training courses.

Our flyers below help teachers (in blue) and parents (in green) to identify and support children with DLD.

**COULD IT BE LANGUAGE?**  
Children with Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) have significant, ongoing difficulties understanding and/or using language which can affect their behaviour and progress at school.

**What are the signs of DLD?**  
Children with DLD may struggle with...

- PROCESSING LANGUAGE** (Teacher icon) - finding it challenging, remembering what others say
- FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS** (Teacher icon) - remembering key or relevant points, completing complex or lengthy
- VOCABULARY** (Teacher icon) - understanding and using words accurately
- GRAMMAR** (Teacher icon) - understanding and using grammar (order and articles), getting words in the correct order with the correct tense
- EXPRESSING IDEAS** (Teacher icon) - saying they find talking a chore, hesitating
- ASKING AND ANSWERING QUESTIONS** (Teacher icon) - they may not ask or answer questions
- MATHS** (Teacher icon) - difficulty with word problems and topics with heavy language load
- READING** (Teacher icon) - understanding what is happening in a story or text
- LITERACY** (Teacher icon) - understanding and using words to spell or handwriting, choosing what to write
- SOCIAL INTERACTION** (Teacher icon) - using language to build relationships and maintaining friendship

Find out more about DLD and training for teachers at:  
[moorhouseinstitute.co.uk/dld-training](http://moorhouseinstitute.co.uk/dld-training)

**COULD IT BE LANGUAGE?**  
Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) is a hidden but common condition when a child has difficulty using and/or understanding language and is a sub-category of SLN (Speech, Language and Communication Needs).

**Key strategies to support language disorders in the classroom**

- TIME** - to process information and instructions
- VISUAL SUPPORT** - visual templates, language rich displays and language support
- SIGN IT** - gestures, social expressions and body language
- DO IT** - multi-sensory teaching approach
- MODIFY YOUR LANGUAGE** - use of speech, one instruction at a time, keep it short
- CHUNK INFORMATION** - predict, repeat, be explicit, use visual language
- WORDS** - explicitly teach key vocabulary
- SMALL STEPS** - break down tasks
- REPEAT IT** - repeat previous learning, do activities more than once
- MODEL IT** - whether spoken or written, model the language

Find out more about DLD and training for teachers at:  
[moorhouseinstitute.co.uk/dld-training](http://moorhouseinstitute.co.uk/dld-training)

**DEVELOPMENTAL LANGUAGE DISORDER**  
Children with Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) have significant, ongoing difficulties understanding and/or using language which can affect their behaviour and progress at school.

**What signs should parents/carers look out for?**  
If your child has DLD, they may struggle with...

- EXPRESSING IDEAS** (Parent icon) - choosing between and between, talking about understanding and understanding what to do, particularly with technical instructions
- VOCABULARY** (Parent icon) - learning, remembering and using new words
- FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS** (Parent icon) - understanding and remembering what to do, particularly with technical instructions
- CONVERSATION** (Parent icon) - following and joining in with conversations, particularly in a group
- MAKING SENSE** (Parent icon) - using words to describe a picture or written sentence that others can understand
- CONCENTRATION** (Parent icon) - maintaining attention level to stay on track
- READING & WRITING** (Parent icon) - making links between letters, sounds, words and meaning for reading and writing
- BEHAVIOUR** (Parent icon) - managing emotions, which may lead to frustration, defiance and being physically upset
- FRIENDSHIP & PLAY** (Parent icon) - making friends, joining in with play, following the rules of a game
- CONFIDENCE** (Parent icon) - using and understanding language without significant self-doubt

Further support and guidance for parents can be found at:  
[afasic.org.uk](http://afasic.org.uk)  
[moorhouseinstitute.co.uk/dld-training](http://moorhouseinstitute.co.uk/dld-training)

**DEVELOPMENTAL LANGUAGE DISORDER**  
Children with Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) have significant, ongoing difficulties understanding and/or using language which can affect their behaviour and progress at school.

**How can I support my child's communication?**

- GET THEIR ATTENTION** - say their name and get down to child level to support their listening
- USE SIMPLE LANGUAGE** - keep sentences short; use simple words; repeat if necessary
- KEEP INSTRUCTIONS SHORT** - say exactly what you want them to do; give one instruction at a time
- SLOW DOWN** - talk calmly and slowly; give them time to respond
- HELP THEM SEE IT** - use pictures, facial expressions, gestures and symbols to help them understand what you say
- CHECK THEY'VE UNDERSTOOD** - ask them to repeat what you have said; if possible, try it again and check their
- LET THEM CHOOSE** - reduce the number of choices; show them or point to the options
- FOCUS ON WORDS** - talk about the words; repeat the meaning; and use them often to play and shared activities
- STOP AND LISTEN!** - only provide responses; repeat what they say with correct grammar
- ENJOY TIME TOGETHER** - make language fun; use play to make learning to talk and listening to each other fun

Further support and guidance for parents can be found at:  
[afasic.org.uk](http://afasic.org.uk)  
[moorhouseinstitute.co.uk/dld-training](http://moorhouseinstitute.co.uk/dld-training)

Available to download at [moorhouseinstitute.co.uk/dld-training](http://moorhouseinstitute.co.uk/dld-training)



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