

## **DEVELOPMENTAL COORDINATION DISORDER; A COLLECTIVE NAME FOR DYSGRAPHIA & DYSPRAXIA**

### **Signs and symptoms of Written Expression/ Dysgraphia**

This specific learning disability is focused on the production of written language. Motor dysgraphia relates to persistent handwriting difficulties associated with an impairment in motor co-ordination. Language-based dysgraphia is associated with difficulties in constructing meaningful and effectively structured written expression. These are students who have extreme difficulty getting their thoughts both in order and then down on paper. Many students with dysgraphia also have dyslexia.

- Has difficulty with catching, kicking or throwing a ball
- Poor at jigsaws or using pegboards to copy patterns
- Discrepancy between what they articulate and what they write
- Difficulty organising thoughts on paper
- Avoidance of or refusal to complete tasks that involve writing or drawing
- Handwriting that is illegible, letter sizes/shapes are irregular and sometimes incomplete
- Alternatively; has neat handwriting but writes very slowly indeed
- Inconsistencies in writing, e.g. mixtures of printing and cursive writing, upper and lower case
- Slow or laboured copying or writing; tires easily during writing tasks; little produced
- Awkward seating position and/or pencil grip and pain in the hand or arm while writing
- Saying words aloud while writing
- Missing or incomplete words in sentences; several spelling mistakes
- Trouble with grammar and sentence structure, often short simple sentences
- If motor dysgraphia or dyspraxia; might also affect how they can throw a ball in sport, manage a brush in art etc and this will have an emotional effect on their well-being
- Inconsistent position of letters on the page with respect to lines and margins
- Inconsistent spaces between words and letters
- Holding the writing instrument very close to the paper, or holding thumb over two fingers and writing from the wrist
- Talking to self whilst writing, or carefully watching the hand that is writing
- Difficulty writing numbers and copying geometric shapes
- Large gap between written ideas and understanding demonstrated through speech.

### **Signs and symptoms of Dyspraxia**

This learning disability is centred on the ability to carry out sequences of co-ordinated motor activity, and the planning and execution of tasks. It is associated with problems of perception, language and thought. Verbal dyspraxia relates to difficulties in programming, sequencing and