



# Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd

Registered Charity Number 1130994.  
Company registered in England and Wales 6915555

## February Newsletter



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### FEBRUARY FAMILY SATURDAY SESSION

#### MEET GEORGE WEBSTER

*All family members welcome*

Saturday 14th February, 10am to 12pm at Bingley Methodist Church, Herbert Street, Bingley, BD16 4JS.

Transport available if required. Please contact the Office.

George Webster – all round superstar, will be joining us on the morning to read a little from his new book and sign some autographs – how exciting is that?

#### VALENTINES DAY

During the morning we will also be celebrating Valentines day – wear something red and join in a craft session to create something special for your loved one.

## Sibz Zone

The Sibz Zone will take place in the small room at Bingley Methodist Church with Elanor. All siblings aged 6+ are welcome to come along for crafts, games and chat.

#### WELCOME TO THE TEAM - JENN CASPER-SMITH

From 1<sup>st</sup> February Jenn will be joining our team as Manager and Early Years Support. Initially she will work 10 hours per week but the aim from September is for her to take on a fuller role as Wendy Uttley reduces her hours.

#### FUTURE PROOFING OUR SERVICES

As Wendy nears retirement the continuity of our charity, its training and services for families, schools and a wide range of professionals for over 25 years is a priority. As mum to a child with Down syndrome, Orla aged 5, with a background in secondary school leadership and teaching Jenn is the ideal person to ensure this move is successful.

#### OUR CHARITY SHOP 'CHROMOSOME ROCKS'

Visit the charity shop Facebook page [here](#).

Over Christmas we had some fantastic donations; and people are still donating – THANK YOU.

We managed to open right up to Christmas Eve and made £3816.26

During January the shop has been closed a number of days. We just do not have enough volunteers to keep it open.

#### WE NEED YOUR HELP PLEASE

The shop is an all round winner:

- It raises funds.
- It costs us nothing – we are rent free.
- It gives work experience to adults with Down syndrome.
- It raises awareness of people with Down syndrome.
- It raises awareness of our charity and the work it does.

WE URGE OUR FAMILIES AND FRIENDS TO OFFER A LITTLE HELP.

If you can spare a few hours just one day a week – and not even every week - we would love to hear from you. Full training/induction will be given and it will mean we can open more hours.



Thank you to  
Mamas and  
papas  
for their  
donation  
of Christmas  
outfits.



Read all about our success in the Telegraph & Argus:  
[Down Syndrome Training and Support Service makes £100k | Bradford Telegraph and Argus](#)

#### WE SMASHED OUR 2025 FUNDRAISING TARGET

Congratulations to all of us!

Our BIG 100K total for 2025 was £103,839.50 – what an amazing achievement.

# Support services for young people



## FEBRUARY PLANS

6th February - Fine motor races and money skills  
13th February - Valentines day crafts and understanding appropriate relationships  
18th February - GOING OUT CLUB – GYM TASTER - Pinnacle Fitness  
27th February - Making pancakes and appropriate greetings



## EQUIPMENT

The club is full of amazing equipment: HiFi, pool table, Xbox, TV, DVD player, exercise bikes, karaoke, football table, chill out area with bean bags and comfy couches, air hockey table and large Connect 4. Plus tuck shop!

**SUBS** - £5 on entry (we do not wish to exclude anyone due to cost, this fee is a donation)

Private Facebook Group—[\(3\) WisH Club | Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/groups/311111111111111/)

## OPENING TIMES

The Club is open **EVERY** Friday 6 to 9pm, for young people aged 11 to 25. You are also welcome to bring a friend or sibling aged 11+  
READ THE [FEEDBACK REPORT](#) HERE



Our older dance group, dance21, for young people aged 12+, dances every Thursday, 6 to 7pm at Footsteps Theatre School, Idle, BD10 8PY with Claire King. Cost is £6 per session (by donation) on entry to enable the dancers to practice their money skills.

## FIXTURES FOR 2026

Our aim every year is to showcase our dancers and raise awareness through various public performances. Events around world Down syndrome day in March, our Chromosome Rocks event in July, our AGM, plus Expressions (as seen above) and Bingley Creates are all such wonderful opportunities.

We ask parents to support their young person to enable them to perform and Karen will be in touch with dates very soon.

Thank you

## FREE ONE-TO-ONE COUNSELLING SESSIONS AVAILABLE

Are you in need of some counselling?  
One-to-one sessions are available with Gill Iley please contact the office for more details or to book.



## COUNSELLING SERVICE FOR ADULTS WITH DOWN SYNDROME:

Gill is also able to offer counselling for adults with Down syndrome. Please contact the office for more details.  
Funded by Sovereign Healthcare.

## GOING OUT CLUB NEWS

We had a fantastic Christmas party at Mavericks; including a surprise visit from Father Christmas.  
A massive thank you to the staff at Mavericks for making it such an enjoyable night.



## PLANS FOR FEBRUARY

### HALF TERM GYM TASTER SESSION

On Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> February, 2 to 3.30pm Irene will be running a taster gym session at Pinnacle Performance Fitness Gym, First Floor, City Exchange, 1 Nelson St, Bradford BD1 5AX

To book your place just follow The link:

[https://form.jotform.com/wendy\\_uttley/gym](https://form.jotform.com/wendy_uttley/gym)



## 'I CAN WORK' PROJECT & INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILLS PROJECT - PLACES AVAILABLE

Both our adult support projects 'I CAN WORK' and INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILLS ('I can shop, cook and clean') have places available.

Both services can be funded through direct payments. Please click on a leaflet to download or contact the office for more information.

Both support schemes involve travel training.



## WEEKLY GYM CLUB FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DOWN SYNDROME aged 11+

The Gym Club takes place at Pinnacle Performance Fitness Studio, Nelson St, Bradford BD1 1LA, Tuesdays 4.30 to 5.30pm.

**The cost is £5 per session by donation.**

Please contact the Office to book.

We are delighted to have received further funding from Bingley Bubble to continue these sessions in 2026.



# WEEKLY ONLINE TRAINING

## READING LANGUAGE INTERVENTION

### with WENDY UTTLEY

The last topic to be tackled with our weekly online training sessions is a six week course covering the Reading Language Intervention programme.

The RLI programme, detailed in a teacher's handbook produced by Down Syndrome Education International, provides a systematic structured approach via daily activities that can be finely adapted to each child. The training days will cover how to assess a child to find a starting point, how to monitor and record progress and how to deliver the daily intervention with practical sessions on how to grade a book and how to take and use a running record.

The RLI programme comprises of two strands of intervention; a reading strand and a language strand. The aim of the RLI programme is to: Improve spoken language and literacy skills of children with Down syndrome and improve teaching practice and support educators. We have for a long time known reading is a strength for children with Down syndrome but not all educators are aware of this or how to put the practicalities into place.

Part 1, 4<sup>th</sup> Feb: Taking a running record. Practical session

Part 2, 11<sup>th</sup> Feb: How to grade a book. Practical session

Part 3, 25<sup>th</sup> Feb: Delivering the reading strand, assessment and delivery

Part 4, 4<sup>th</sup> Mar: Delivering the phonics part of the reading strand

Part 5, 11<sup>th</sup> Mar: Delivering the language strand

Part 6, 18<sup>th</sup> Mar: One hour consultation

## WORKSHOP: SEXUALITY RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION

**ME: My body, my friends, my life - 5 week online workshop, Thursdays 22<sup>nd</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup> Jan, 5<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> Feb, 10am to 12pm**

[ME: my body, my friends, my life | Down Syndrome T&SS](#)

The workshop will provide knowledge and activities to enable parents and school staff to teach children & young people with Down syndrome about their bodies, keeping safe, privacy, puberty, social boundaries, feelings and self help skills. It will cover:

- How important such training is for young people with learning disabilities. Names for body parts.
- Privacy. Public and private body parts, actions, places, touch and conversations
- Puberty for girls, puberty for boys,
- Feelings, personal hygiene, self help skills.
- Touching, hugging, affection, friendships, appropriate greetings
- Safety in the community. Assertiveness. Abuse prevention strategies

How do we become our own protector?

### FEEDBACK INCLUDES

- *Very good for all people working with young people with learning difficulties*
- *Enjoyed meeting other people and being able to talk openly about issues and facts of life*
- *It's given me the confidence to talk about the changes my child will go through and most of all helped me to prepare and be aware of what is to come.*
- *Understand now the importance of starting this work in primary schools and practical ways of doing this.*

### Expectations of behaviour

6 week workshop limited to 7 cases, 2 hours per week for 6 weeks

starts 25<sup>th</sup> March 2026 [Six week behaviour workshop- online | Down Syndrome T&SS](#)

All family members and school staff are welcome to attend in a bid to provide a consistent approach. This group of people will be called a 'team around a child'.

The course will cover an overview of the learning profile of a child with Down syndrome looking at how difficult behaviours may develop. Participants will then be encouraged to focus on a specific behaviour they wish to modify and we will discuss methods and ideas to modify the behaviour. Each week opportunities will be offered to discuss progress and learn from each other.

*· It has changed my ability to look and evaluate a situation.*

*· I now feel more confident in how to progress and manage any difficult behaviour I've experienced*

The cost for this workshop is £100 per team around a child. This means parents, family members and school staff all supporting the same child are invited as part of a team for £100.

## OVERVIEW OF ONLINE TRAINING

- ◆ There are 22 sessions in total and these can be booked individually at £5 per session, or as a bundle for £80.
- ◆ The sessions run EVERY WEDNESDAY, 10am to 11am during term time.
- ◆ Sessions are recorded so that you don't need to miss any.

Read more here [Training | Down Syndrome Training and Support Service Ltd](#)

### ONLINE TRAINING FOR PROFESSIONALS AND PARENTS IN THE SPECIFIC LEARNING NEEDS OF A PERSON BORN WITH DOWN SYNDROME with Dr Wendy Uttley



All course are divided into several one hour online sessions. Topics covers are:

- Introduction to Down syndrome
- Signing and Down syndrome
- Teaching basic number skills to children with Down syndrome and other learning difficulties using the Numicon approach
- Teaching number skills beyond 10, time & money
- Let's make it visual - using visual resources to support speech, language, communication and literacy skills
- Reading, Language Intervention for children with Down syndrome

Each topic will be followed with an online consultation for participants. In total 22 sessions spread over the first 2 terms. Sessions will run **EVERY WEDNESDAY MORNING** 10am to 11am.

visit: <https://www.downsyndromebradford.com/training> or follow the QR code

## AIMING TO BETTER MEET SCHOOL STAFF AVAILABILITY

We hope that offering our training via online weekly sessions will enable more schools to access the training needed to fully educate and include a child with Down syndrome. Acting on feedback it will remove the time for travel and enable schools to better plan cover.

## WE ARE DEDICATED TO EMPOWERING SCHOOLS TO INCLUDE AND EDUCATE A CHILD WITH DOWN SYNDROME SO THEY ARE ABLE TO ACHIEVE THEIR FULL POTENTIAL - WHATEVER THAT MAY BE.

## INTRODUCTION TO DOWN SYNDROME –

### Free or pay by donation

Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2026. Bookings now being taken. Visit:

[Introduction to Down syndrome - 0 - 12 | Down Syndrome T&SS](#)

## CPD ACCREDITATION RENEWAL

Due to funding difficulties we let the CPD accreditation on our training expire. This is now to be renewed and moving forward our online training course will be accredited.



## EARLY DEVELOPMENT GROUPS



This term we have started a new group, the red group, for children who are a little older and, for reasons various, are not making progress or are currently out of school.

All other groups and one to one sessions continue to run as planned this term, delivered by Wendy Uttley and Laura Hempel.

These groups are currently funded from our reserves and an award from the Freemasons.

Our youngest group, the green group, is currently our busiest group. With so many babies born last year – if all attend we have 8! During January Sarah Hutchinson from the Maternity & Neonatal Voice Partnership (MNVP) joined the group, chatting to parents after the session to gather feedback on their antenatal and postnatal experiences.

## TWIRLY21s

Twirly21s is a lovely continuation from our early development groups. They are specifically for children with Down syndrome aged 5 to 12, allowing parents and children from previous groups to keep in touch and share experiences.

Twirly21s dance every Saturday, 2.30 to 3.30pm at Footsteps Theatre School, Idle, BD10 8PY. Classes are delivered by Claire King who has a wealth of experience working with young children who have Down syndrome. Dancers are asked to pay £5 (donation) on entry to practice their money skills.



## PICTURES FROM OUR FAMILY CHRISTMAS PARTY



## SPEECH & LANGUAGE GROUP SESSIONS

### FEBRUARY SPEECH & LANGUAGE GROUPS

- Jessica's groups are currently being delivered on a Sunday by Lauren until March/April. We appreciate that this isn't convenient for several of the children we support, but we are unable to reschedule. Jessica is now on maternity leave. We wish her all the best. Jessica's groups will take place on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> February.
- Lauren's groups will take place Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> February and 1<sup>st</sup> March. On 1<sup>st</sup> February the adult group will be visiting All Saints Church, Bingley.

Photo shows Jessica's adult group enjoying their Christmas party.



### FUNDED BY THE HEALTH LOTTERY



## ELIJAH'S TRIATHLON

A massive congratulations to Elijah, age 9 for completing his Christmas Triathlon; running 10km, swimming 1.5km and a bike ride 40km during the month of December. What a fantastic achievement. Elijah has, to date, raised £350.50 plus Gift Aid of £86.38.



There's still time to donate by visiting:  
[Hannah Eustace is fundraising for Down Syndrome Training and Support Service Ltd](https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/hannah-eustace-down-syndrome-training-and-support-service-ltd)



## OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY RESEARCH PROJECT

Leeds Beckett University

Parents of children with Down syndrome aged 6 months to 13 years needed. To take part and share your story in your own words visit: [Parent Perspectives on Down Syndrome: Life, Identity and Connection](https://parentperspectives.jisc.ac.uk/school-of-health/parent-perspectives-on-down-syndrome-life-identity-connection)

# News, training and support from elsewhere



## BRADFORD SEND NEWSLETTER

[SEND News - January 2026](#)



## One Minute Guides

Masking Toileting Sleep  
Assessments Reviews Exclusions and more...

Bradford Council have produced a series of easy to read guides on a range of SEND topics, 'Carer Wellbeing' being one of their most recent and helpful guides.

These can be accessed here: [Bradford Local Offer | One minute Guides](#)

## TRAINING & RESOURCES



IPSEA are holding an online event for parents and carers currently going through appeals against the contents of an EHC plan, or against the school named in the EHC plan, with hints and tips for tribunals: [SEND Tribunal hints and tips: 11 February](#)

Weds 11 Feb 2026 | 9.45am – 3pm | £79

Eyecare for adults with Down syndrome: A webinar with The DSA and Prof. Maggie Woodhouse OBE on the changes in vision which occur with ageing: [Eyecare for adults and getting older](#)

Weds 11 March 2026 | 12 – 1.15pm | FREE

## Have your say!

### Bradford's 'SEND One Plan' parent/carer engagement sessions

Bradford's SEND and Inclusion Partnership has created a clear and joined-up plan called the [SEND One Plan](#). It brings together everything from the district's [SEND Strategy](#) and advice from the Local Government Association. Join the team at an upcoming parent/carer engagement session on Friday, 13 March 2026, 10 - 12pm. This is an online. Book: [supportnews@PFBA.org.uk](mailto:supportnews@PFBA.org.uk)

**CALLING FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS**

Hello! My name is Yuko, and I am a student researcher at King's College London. I am looking for children who want to take part in my study!

**Aim of the study**  
We would like to understand how children who have Down syndrome from various language environment, including bilingual children, develop their English skills

**Who can take part?**

- Pupils with Down syndrome
- Age between 7 and 16

Take part and get our original T-shirt and certificate

If you want to take part or have any questions...  
Yuko Matsuka  
Email: [yuko.matsuka@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:yuko.matsuka@kcl.ac.uk)  
School of Education, Communication & Society  
King's College London

**REQUEST DETAIL FROM HERE**

[REQUEST DETAIL FROM HERE](#)

**Bradford Children and Families Trust**

Are you concerned about your child's education or development?

Then come along to our SEND Marketplace. We have lots of specialist services available, providing information, advice and emotional support.

Support can be offered in the following:

- Autism/ADHD
- Speech and language development
- Relationship issues
- Sleeping Difficulties
- Finance/Benefits
- Information on Education and training

**Carer's Resource** **SENDIAS** **Local Offer** **Family Navigator**

On the last Monday of every month

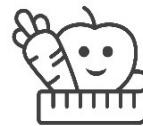
At Family Hubs across the district

[fyi.bradford.gov.uk](http://fyi.bradford.gov.uk)



ACADEMY OPEN DAY: Sat 7<sup>th</sup> Feb

Mind The Gap are offering the chance to find out more about what they can offer for those who may be interested in performing Arts. The open day will offer live performances, information on the courses they offer and workshops to get involved with, and will run from 12-4pm. Contact them on [arts@mind-the-gap.org.uk](mailto:arts@mind-the-gap.org.uk) for more details.



The Down Syndrome Medical Interest Group

The Down Syndrome Medical Interest Group have created a resource with The DSA about **weight gain** and people with Down syndrome. It's a useful document which covers reasons for weight gain, health implications and tools to help. This can be accessed via the link here: [Weight Resource DS](#)

## HEALTHCARE CORNER: HANDY TIPS & GUIDES

### Respiratory infections

At this time of year, lots of us are getting ill and respiratory infections are on the rise. This often has a greater impact on people with Down syndrome, so there is a guide for respiratory infections here: [Respiratory infections](#)

### Tips for triaging and support in treating children:

People with Down syndrome can present differently to others when suffering with infections. This can often be frustrating when navigating the correct healthcare support, especially when the person you are caring for is ill. This is a useful guide which can be used when working with healthcare professionals who may not know your child or young person as well as you, and therefore may disregard symptoms: [Downs syndrome top tips](#)



### Recruiting Children with Down Syndrome and Children with Williams Syndrome for a Maths Intervention Project!

#### About the researchers

I am Arcelia Cheung, a PhD student at University College London (UCL), supervised by Professor Jo Van Herwegen, Professor Michael Thomas, and Professor Victoria Simms

#### What's involved?

- A 5-week maths intervention programme, delivered by parents with little resources needed but many fun games!
- Participants will receive materials to use over the programme (e.g., instruction manual for each game, visual cards, stickers)
- Children will complete online and face-to-face cognitive and maths assessments at 4 time points
- After successful completion of intervention and assessments at 4 time points, parents will receive a detailed report of their children's abilities to support their learning



Child Development and Learning Difficulties Lab

UCL Institute of Education

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## FUNDING UPDATE

This list of donations includes funds received December 2025 and January 2026. A total of £5412.88 from donations and a total of £26,959 from grants received. A big thank you to everyone for their kindness.

**Charity shop, £3816.26**

**Justgiving, £618.60**

**Regular donors, £499.66 from 25 donors**

**Give as You Live, online shopping, £28.36**

**K pollard, £350 donation**

**Keighley + District Model Aircraft Club, £100 donation**

## SUCCESSFUL FUNDING BIDS

- The Baily Thomas Charitable Trust, grant for speech and language therapy, £10,000
- Nominet, grant for subscriptions and technology, £10,000
- Marsh Charitable Foundation, unrestricted donation, £600
- Co-op Community Fund, donation of £5 for community sign up
- Sir James Reckitt Trust, grant towards Early Year Support Packs, £3,000
- The Shears Foundation Grant for dance classes, £3,354

## OTHER FUNDRAISING EVENTS PLANNED FOR 2026

Monday 27<sup>th</sup> April, 6.30pm: **Curry and Quiz night at the Shama, Bingley**. Book [here](#).

Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> July, 11am to 5pm: **Chromosome Rocks #26** – our 4<sup>th</sup> big event at Keighley Rugby Union Football Club. This year we are aiming to have more performances by people who have Down syndrome/learning disability. We will also be running the final of a talent show.

### ENTRY FORM FOR TALENT SHOW @ CHROMOSOME ROCKS

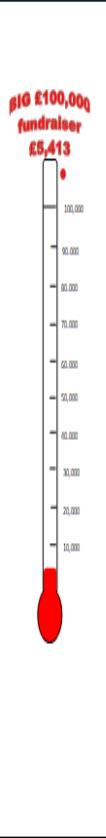
The registration form for our talent show is now live. Entries are by video. Deadline 30<sup>th</sup> May 2026. The three finalists will perform at the event with the winner being chosen on the day.

Entry form: [Talent Show registration form](#)

Later in the year **Autumn Fashion Show**

DOWNLOAD OUR FUNDRAISING NEWSLETTER

HERE: [Fundraising 2026 - our plans and how to get involved](#)



## DO YOU SHOP AT THE CO-OP? ARE YOU A CO-OP MEMBER?

We are current one of the Co-op's charities of the year and once you are a member

you can help raise funds for us every time you shop.

815 people have so far signed up!

Just use the link below to sign up. You will need to pay £1 to become a member. You then need to choose our charity.

<https://coopapp.onelink.me/ftOk/dbbb4fmv>

Then every time you shop remember to use your card or app.

## INSTORE COLLECTIONS

*Do you want to help with collections? If so, please get in touch. Thank you.*



## JOHNNY'S WALK 2026

**This year the canal walk will involve canoes!!!!**

**Sign up here:**

[BIG 100K 2026 - can we do it again?](#)

[JustGiving](#)

Last year in March 2025 Johnny, father of three, including Leo, who has Down syndrome, and over 80 supporters, all wearing yellow tee shirts walked 18 miles along the canal from St James's Hospital, Leeds to our centre in Bingley. THEY RAISED £67,220.20 including Gift Aid, £35,795.73 for Down Syndrome Training & Support Service and £31,424.47 for Melanoma Focus.

Johnny has terminal cancer and is determined to continue to support us.

## THE PLAN SO FAR FOR MARCH 2026

Our aim is to walk on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2026. Details yet to be finalised. You can sign up for the walk here:

[https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/100kdstss](#)

or contact the Office by email [here](#).

## CHRISTMAS RAFFLE WINNERS

1st prize - Luxury Christmas Hamper – Christine and Ted

2nd prize - Handmade Luxury Leather Handbag - Lynne

3rd prize - My First Remote Control Car - Jill

4th prize - Children's Classic Book Collection - Ruth

5th prize - Gin & Tonic Gift Set – John Davies

6th prize - Baylis & Harding Gift Set – Catherine Bailey

7th prize - George Webster signed 'Why Not' Book – Karen Bickerton

Thank you to everyone who donated prizes and bought raffle tickets. Total raised £186.92

## KEEP UP TO DATE WITH EVENTS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

[https://www.instagram.com/downsyndrometss/](#)

### PUBLIC FACEBOOK PAGE

[https://www.facebook.com/DownsyndromeTSS/](#) For general and more formal information.

**CLOSED FACEBOOK GROUP** Our closed Facebook group provides information on day to day activities

[https://www.facebook.com/groups/DSTSS/](#)

**INSTAGRAM** [https://www.instagram.com/downsyndrometss/](#)

## CONTACT Wendy Uttley or Heidi Grosvenor

Website: [www.downsyndromebradford.com](#)

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