

Bedfordshire Down's Syndrome Support Group

2024 AGM Chairman's report

The last year has been a challenge for the committee, as our total funds have reduced, due to a growing membership and increased costs. We have been very fortunate for many years to have had enough funds to provide services for 2 years in advance, however, this year, that timeline has reduced to approximately 18 months and so we had to make the difficult decision to increase charges to our families. Thankfully this has enabled us to continue to provide all our educational services and social activities as usual this year.

We have been delighted to welcome some new members to our **Early Development Group** this year, which has allowed us to continue to provide this vital service that aids the development of our youngest members, as well as providing a fantastic social opportunity for families of small children to get together. The EDG has now been going for many years, and in that time, we have seen that this crucial service is often a springboard for young families to access other services and activities within the Support Group and also develop long lasting friendships for the children and also the parents.

Special thanks to Helen and Sue who have provided this service from the very beginning and do such an excellent job!

We were very fortunate at the end of last year to have Beth Davies take over as our **speech & language** therapist so we could continue to provide this vital service. We have had 15 children benefit from the excellent sessions this year.

Speech & language is so vital to communication in all aspects of life and yet is often a challenge for our children for various reasons.

So, we would like to say a huge thank you to Beth, Sue and Pui for providing such wonderful support to our children and their families and enabling them to achieve their true potential.

We would also like to say a special thank you to Emma, who retired as a trustee this year. Emma organised the admin, liaised with the speech therapy team and our families' accessing the speech sessions, for many years, a role which often had surprising and unseen challenges. We greatly appreciate all her hard work, time and effort in this role.

Social activities have become an increasingly important aspect of the Support Group over the years, and we are very proud to now have 4 age specific social groups, as well as all our family activities throughout the year.

The **Under 5s group** is an essential way for families to be introduced to the Support Group, meet other families with young children with Down's syndrome and make friends. Outings this year have included, a steam train trip, a visit to Bekonscot model village and also Mead Open Farm. Unfortunately, as families' schedules become increasingly busy, it has

sometimes been difficult to arrange dates that everyone can attend, but we hope we can return to monthly meet ups in 2025, as this is such a wonderful way for new families to become part of our community, to feel welcome and prevent isolation as they start their journey with their young children.

We have very recently set up our 4th social group which is **for 5 – 12-year-olds**. This is an age group we have wanted to provide specifically for, for several years, but have not had anyone to organise activities for us. Therefore, we would like to say special thanks to Aimee for organising this new group and also for all her work organising the Under 5s.

Our Teen club for 12 – 17-year-olds has been going for many years and continues to provide a great youth club for our teenagers. Activities have included swimming, pirate golf, bowling, and cycling at Marston Moretaine as well as fun evenings at the Flitwick Methodist Church Hall. We would like to say a huge thank you to Lynn for continuing to lead this group, and who has been with us from the beginning, special thanks also to Jayne Styne who has helped so much over the years but is now moving away from the area. We also say huge thanks to our volunteers Dan & Evie, and new volunteers Poppy and Amelie, without whose help we could not provide these important social sessions for our teenagers.

As our children get older, **so our Adult Social Group** continues to grow, with 20 regular attendees now. Activities this year have included a visit to top jump, pirate golf, inclusive fitness gym, yoga, bowling, golf football, as well as a quiz and games night. We would like to say thank you to Leanne for continuing to run this group so well for us and special thanks to Helen for taking over whilst Leanne was on her maternity leave. Thanks too to all our volunteers, Paul, Jane Reddy, Will, Rhiannon & Rose. This group represents all that the Support Group is about, providing opportunities for our youngsters to have fun and make friends, develop confidence and social skills.

Thanks too to Karen who continues to organise the admin and oversees the groups.

Our Dance Class continues to be well attended, with the youngsters really enjoying the sessions which help them keep fit, learn new routines and most importantly, have fun! Many thanks to Jade from Spectrum Arts for her endless energy and enthusiasm for these sessions.

Our Multisports group provides a great opportunity for 5 – 12-year-olds to keep fit, learn new skills and have fun. We have recently changed the time of the session to Sunday mornings, and we hope this will lead to a greater attendance, so that we can continue to provide this great activity for our younger families. Thanks to Jack from Elite Skills & Fitness for running the sessions for us.

The Support Group also provides many **social opportunities for the whole family throughout** the year.

Our trips to the theatre are always popular and this year our annual trip to the **Panto** in January was no exception, with 43 families attending.

We also had an extra treat of going to see Disney's **Aladdin** in April. 37 families joined us to see this magical production!

We had a lovely visit to **Herrings Green Farm** in May, with 15 families enjoying the opportunity to hold some owls and get close to snakes, ferrets and skunks as well as seeing the wonderful bird of prey display. A great family day out!

And we had another wonderful **PGL activity weekend** this year with 21 families joining us. Everyone enjoying canoeing, archery, zip wire, climbing, aeroball and fencing. This really is a fantastic weekend with such a strong sense of community.

Thank you to Helen for continuing to run this trip so well for us.

We had our **Get Together** in March, at Kids in Action, to celebrate DS Awareness week with 20 families attending. This is a great event to allow our families to come together, have a chat and get to know each other better. Thank you to Kelly, Tracey, & Jenny for organising.

We had our usual **Summer Outings** with trips to Southend on Sea, Wicksteed Park, Mead Open Farm, Hertfordshire Zoo, bowling & horse riding. These were all well attended and gave vital social opportunities for our youngsters in the long summer holidays.

Thank you to Karen, Carrie, Kelly, Helen (and me) for organising these great family summer fun days.

In October we had a trip to the **Circus** with Circus Starr. 48 people taking up the offer of free tickets for a lovely show. Thank you to Tracey, Carrie and Helen for organising.

And we have just had our last event of the year with a great **Christmas party** yesterday. 28 families booked in for an afternoon of great fun, dancing, & food. We also raised £585 with the raffle! Thank you to Karen, Tracey, Leanne & Paul and all those that helped make this a wonderful Christmassy afternoon for all our families.

It costs £20,000 a year to provide all these services and activities. This all comes from **fundraising**, donations and a few grants.

Our fundraising committee have done a great job, as always, this year, making yet another vital contribution to our income.

The **Quiz** in October provided a fun evening for all the family and raised £1,025 and the recent **Christmas Fayre** raised £1,950, our highest amount in recent years. It was a lovely festive event, and it was great to have so many of our families come along to support us and help make the event a great success!

There is a huge amount of work that goes into organizing these events, applying for grants and encouraging people to fundraise and donate, so I would like to thank the fundraising committee of Tracey (our very own raffle queen), Karen, Kelly, Carol, Kathy, & Jenny, and special thanks to Jenna, Mel, Aimee & Leanne for volunteering to join in helping the team this year

Special thanks also to Emma, who has stepped down from the team this year, for all her hard work and time devoted to fundraising over many years.

We would also like to thank every single person who has fundraised for us, who has bought a raffle ticket, who has attended the Fayre or the Quiz, who has gone to their company to get funds for us, who fundraised in Awareness Week or throughout the year, or who has donated – be it £1, £100 or more.

Without your efforts and help, we could not provide our services and activities. We sincerely appreciate every single contribution.

I would also like to thank the **main committee** for their tireless hard work and dedication. The committee members all give their time voluntarily, they are not paid. Time given to the Support Group is time away from their families and social lives and yet they still give selflessly to improve the opportunities for our youngsters and their families.

So I thank Kelly, Karen, Tracey, Linda, Helen and Derek.

And thanks to Heather, Emma and Jenny, who have all stood down from the committee this year after many years of helping.

Without all of their hard work and commitment, the Support Group would not exist.

We would also like to say special thanks to Derek for all his hard work, time and effort over the last 7 years in his role as treasurer. The work of the treasurer has increased immensely over the years as the group has grown in membership and the services and activities we provide has increased. It is a role of huge responsibility which Derek has undertaken with meticulous thoroughness.

Derek has now decided to step down from this role and so we are extremely grateful to Catherine Bianco for taking over the role of treasurer and we would like to warmly welcome her to the committee.

We also say a special thank you to Diane Herbert who has recently stepped down as our independent examiner of the accounts. Di has done this job for us for over 20 years, a vital role that is necessary for our annual submissions to the Charities Commission.

And finally, I would like to thank all our families for continuing to attend events, fundraising and donating and making the Support Group the successful and wonderful community it is today.

The committee and I would like to wish all our families a very Merry Christmas and we look forward to you sharing our next chapter in 2025, which will be our 25th year. We hope you will join us, in continuing to celebrate each and every one of our fabulous children, and all that they teach and inspire us every single day.

Teresa Hurley

Chairman

THE TRUSTEES DECLARE THAT THEY HAVE APPROVED THE TRUSTEES REPORT ABOVE
AS FORMING PART OF THE APPROVED MINUTES FOR THE AGM HELD ON 9 DECEMBER
2024

SIGNATURE



FULL NAME

DEREK HRYDZIUSZKO

POSITION

TREASURER

DATE

16/1/24

BEDFORDSHIRE DOWN'S SYNDROME SUPPORT GROUP

Registered Charity number 1102599

Receipts and Payments Account for the year ended 31 March 2024

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	23-24	23-24	23-24	22-23	22-23	22-23
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Income						
Donations and gifts	4,080	-	4,080	3,810	-	3,810
Fundraising and raffles	10,779	-	10,779	8,163	-	8,163
Outings/socials/events	-	14,324	14,324	-	12,970	12,970
Speech Therapy	-	2,760	2,760	-	2,870	2,870
Education courses	-	590	590	-	1,015	1,015
Dance Events	-	135	135	-	-	-
U5s/Teen/Adult Groups	-	1,422	1,422	-	1,230	1,230
	14,859	19,231	34,090	11,973	18,085	30,058
Expenditure						
Outings/socials/events	3,350	14,324	17,674	12,138	12,970	25,108
Fundraising costs	1,753	-	1,753	306	-	306
Speech Therapy	7,260	2,760	10,020	5,355	2,870	8,225
Education courses	3,271	590	3,861	2,660	1,015	3,675
General/Postage/stationery	654	-	654	1,225	-	1,225
Dance Events	1,136	135	1,271	788	-	788
U5s/Teen/Adult Groups	2,282	1,422	3,704	2,005	1,230	3,235
	19,706	19,231	38,937	24,477	18,085	42,562
Surplus/(Deficit for the year)	(4,847)	-	(4,847)	(12,504)	-	(12,504)

Approved on behalf of the Trustees:-

Name: Derek Hrydziuszko

Signature: 

Position: Treasurer

Date: 22/11/24

Name: Teresa Hurley

Signature: 

Position: Chairperson

Date: 22/11/24

BEDFORDSHIRE DOWN'S SYNDROME SUPPORT GROUP

Registered Charity number 1102599

Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at 31 March 2024

	Unrestricted 2024 £	Restricted 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Unrestricted 2023 £	Restricted 2023 £	Total Total £
Cash at bank and in hand	29,554	-	29,554	34,401	-	34,401
Net Assets	29,554	-	29,554	34,401	-	34,401

Represented by:

Brought forward at 1 April	34,401	-	34,401	46,755	150	46,905
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	(4,847)	-	(4,847)	(12,354)	(150)	(12,504)
Balance at 31 March	29,554	-	29,554	34,401	-	34,401

Cash at bank and in hand

	Santander £	Cash £	Total £
Opening bank balance	34,401	-	34,401
Receipts	34,090	-	34,090
Payments	(38,937)	-	(38,937)
Closing balance	29,554	-	29,554

Approved on behalf of the Trustees:-

Name: Derek Hrydziusz

Position: Treasurer

Date:

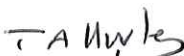

22/11/24

Name: Teresa Hurley

Signature:

Position: Chairperson

Date:


22/11/24

BEDFORDSHIRE DOWN'S SYNDROME SUPPORT GROUP
Registered Charity number 1102599
Income and Expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2024

<u>INCOME</u>	£
Donations, Membership and Gifts	
Donations and Gifts	4,071
Membership and Miscellaneous	9
	<u>4,080</u>
Fundraising activities and events	
General fundraising activities/events	10,779
	<u>10,779</u>
Outings, parties, social events etc.	
PGL Weekend Deposits	7,276
Contributions to other outings, parties, social events etc.	7,048
	<u>14,324</u>
Education events	
Education Training Package Attendance	-
Early Development Group Places	590
	<u>590</u>
Regular Events	
Speech Therapy Subs	2,760
Teen Group Subs	370
Adult Group Subs	1,052
Dance Events Subs	135
U5s Subs	-
	<u>4,317</u>
Total income	<u>34,090</u>
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	
Outings, parties, social events etc.	
Theatre Trips	6,472
PGL Weekend Payments and Refunds	3,266
Other Social Events, Xmas Party and Summer Outings	7,936
	<u>17,674</u>
General	
Fundraising costs	1,753
General costs/Postage/Stationery/Website	654
	<u>2,407</u>
Education events	
Education Training Package	-
Early Development Group	3,861
	<u>3,861</u>
Regular Events	
Speech Therapy	10,020
Teen Group	1,408
Adult Group	1,996
Dance events	1,271
Under 5s Group	300
	<u>14,995</u>
Total expenditure	<u>38,937</u>
Surplus/(Deficit for the year)	<u>(4,847)</u>

Teresa Hurley TADW
 chairperson
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 DEREK HRYDZIUSZIKO
 TREASURER
 22/11/24

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Bedfordshire Down's Syndrome Support Group Charity Number 1102599

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Bedfordshire Down's Syndrome Support Group ('the Charity') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which are set out on pages 1 to 3.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charity you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Name: Diane Herbert

Relevant professional qualification or body: FCA, DhCA

Date: 22 November 2024