



**PORTSMOUTH  
DOWN SYNDROME  
ASSOCIATION**

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## **Unaudited Financial Statements Year ended 31 March 2025**

**James Todd and Co Limited**

# Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association

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# PORTSMOUTH DOWN SYNDROME ASSOCIATION

## **Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association Trustees' Report and Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2025**

The Chairperson submits Portsmouth DSA's Annual Report and the Statement of Financial Activities and Balance Sheet for the year ended 31 March 2025 on behalf of the Board of Trustees.

### **Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association**

Also known by the working name Portsmouth DSA

Formerly known as Portsmouth Down Syndrome Support Group and Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association (Footprints)

**Registered Charity Number:** 1147355

**Registered Address:** Unit 1, Aspen House, Airport Service Road, Portsmouth, Hants PO3 5RA

### **Board of Trustees:**

**Rachael Ross MBE** - Chair and CEO (Director of Fundraising & Education/Training, School Advisory Service and Training Director, Post 11 Services Manager, Community Liaison – Business, Health, Education, Music Man Project, Portsmouth, National Down Syndrome Policy Group, All-Party Parliamentary Group, and Parliamentary Liaison)

**Ken Ross OBE** – Vice-chair and Treasurer (Development Officer, Fundraising, Community Liaison, National Down Syndrome Policy Group, All-Party Parliamentary Group, and Parliamentary Liaison)

**Alice Osborne** – Charity Secretary (Charity Centre Manager, Pre-school and Primary Services Manager, Manager for Community Health, Training, Family Liaison Team & Membership)

**Simon Brock** – Trustee

**Gregory Jones KC** – Trustee

**Spencer Pitfield OBE** – Trustee

**Bank:** HSBC, Commercial Road, Portsmouth, PO1 1EP

**Independent Examiner:** Mrs J D Watts FCCA, ACA  
James Todd & Co, Furzehall Farm, 110 Wickham Road, Fareham,  
Hampshire, PO16 7JH

# Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association

**Patrons:** We are very honoured to have the support of some wonderful individuals who lend their support to the charity and help us raise awareness:

- Professor Sue Buckley OBE - world-leading expert in education and development for children with Down syndrome, and renowned Chief Scientist of Down Syndrome Education International
- Emma Barton (Actor)
- Scott Heffield (Adventurer and TV Presenter)
- Tim Treloar (Adventurer and TV Presenter)
- Liam Bairstow (Actor)
- Tommy Jessop (Actor and Advocate)

## **Objects**

The charity's objects are set out in the charity's governing document:

- To offer support and social activities for families
- To preserve and protect the health and welfare of children with Down syndrome
- To advance the education of the medical profession and the public when appropriate about childhood disability

## **Introduction**

**Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association** is an **award-winning charity**, and we are very proud to have been awarded **Royal Approval** and '**Freedom of the City**' of Portsmouth for our '**exemplary work**'.

Formerly established in May 2009, Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association is committed to improving the lives of individuals across the South of England and beyond. We know our young people can succeed when given the opportunity with the right support, and we believe they deserve the same opportunities and right to be included and experience success as their peers.

**Portsmouth DSA provides a range of some of the best specialist services and activities in the UK.** Our programme is the most fully comprehensive and progressive service package supporting both the family and the child from the point of diagnosis to young adulthood. Our direct interventions in all areas of development, education and training, assist families and professionals in providing tangible and effective support to improve outcomes. We teach children the skills they need to reach their developmental milestones, succeed at school, and become valued and productive members of their communities. Services are offered free of charge, eliminating financial barriers to ensure broad and equitable access.

Portsmouth DSA works hard to raise awareness, champion inclusion, and celebrate diversity in all areas. Life expectancy has dramatically increased for people with Down syndrome. However, awareness in the community, health and education provision, employment

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opportunities and regulations have not kept pace with this progress, largely due to lack of representation and interest at governmental levels. As a result, individuals continue to experience inadequate provision and outcomes, discrimination and exclusion on daily basis. We strive to readdress the balance and promote equality for all by equipping individuals & families with the knowledge & skills they need to succeed in all areas and improve outcomes by raising awareness in all sectors of society & sharing the skills and knowledge required to enable meaningful inclusion. When children with Down syndrome are given opportunities to participate and be fully included, the whole community benefits.

Our activities continue to be very well received by parents and professionals, our services capacity is full, and we continue to operate waiting lists due to high demand for the school service in particular. Membership has continued to steadily rise, but with careful planning we have been able to cater for all our new families' needs. We have once again seen an increase in the number of prospective parents with a diagnosis making contact. As a first point of contact new families have been put in touch with our excellent **Family Liaison Team** who always ensure a warm welcome.

**Governing Document:** Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association is governed by a constitution adopted on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2011 which has been approved by both HMRC and the Charity Commission.

### The Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees of Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association has overall responsibility for the charity's activities and finances. There are currently six dedicated and experienced trustees on the Board, three of whom have a child with Down syndrome. These members carry out various managerial and administrative responsibilities as full and part-time 'professional volunteers' in addition to their Trustee roles.

**Helen Nelson**, the previous Charity Treasurer and book-keeper retired earlier in the year and was replaced by **Ken Ross as Treasurer, and Tracy Dukes our new book-keeper**. We would like to whole-heartily thank Helen for her years of dedication and exemplary service.



The **Chair of the Board** and charity co-founder **Rachael Ross MBE**, previously served on the Board of Trustees for Down Syndrome Education International (DSEI) for over five years, as well as on education boards. Rachael has experience of governance, fundraising, and issues concerning Down syndrome at a local and national level. As a qualified English, Media, Geography, Sport and Drama teacher with specialism in 'additional needs', and parent of a child with Down syndrome, she created the national reading scheme 'Up for Reading' for DSEI which was endorsed and supported by over 100 the UK's top publishers and leading authors and helped to raise the profile of Down syndrome across the UK. Her education and awareness articles have also been featured in national and regional education publications such as the Times Educational Supplement.

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Rachael is a Founding Officer and Trustee of the **National Down Syndrome Policy Group** (NDSPG), where she played a key role, with fellow trustee Ken, drafting the Down Syndrome Bill, which led to the landmark **Down Syndrome Act 2022**. The NDSPG also serves as Secretariat to the **All-Party Parliamentary Group on Down Syndrome**, and both Ken and Rachael are the group's **parliamentary liaisons**.

Rachael is also BAFTA's first joint **Accessibility and Inclusion Patron**, a position she shares with Ken. Together, they have been instrumental in advancing authentic representation and access for disabled talent in the film and television industry.

In recognition of her outstanding and sustained contributions to education and advocacy for people with Down syndrome, Rachael has received numerous honours. These include the **Points of Light Award** (2015) from the Prime Minister, the **Portsmouth Civic Award** (2018) presented by the Lord Mayor of Portsmouth, and an **MBE** in 2019 from the late Queen for *Services to Education and Down Syndrome*. In 2022, she was honoured during the Queen's Platinum Jubilee year with a **Platinum Champions Award**, and was recognised as one of **70 exemplary charity leaders** for her exceptional efforts during the pandemic, receiving a **Special Recognition** award from Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth.

Within Portsmouth DSA, Rachael plays a 'hands on' central role in day-to-day operations as **CEO**, and her professional volunteer responsibilities include being the **Director of Educational Services** and **Director of Fundraising**. She manages the **Nursery, Schools and Further Education Advisory and Training Service**, coordinates **teenage social activity evenings**, and oversees the overall strategic direction and smooth running of the charity.

The charity's Vice-Chairperson **Ken Ross OBE** is the charity's **Development Officer**. He has worked as an entrepreneur predominantly in the real estate, film and charity sectors. He is a Founding Trustee for the **National Down Syndrome Policy Group** acting as **Secretariat to the All-Parliamentary Group on Down Syndrome**, and **BAFTA's joint first Accessibility and Inclusion Patron**. Ken is also the Director and Chair of the **Southeast Hants Special Olympic Team**. Ken has significant experience in working with national bodies to provide solutions within his areas of expertise with a particular focus on learning disability inclusion within the Arts and real estate sectors, as well as working with various 'think tanks'. Ken has been honoured by HM the Queen, with a **Platinum Champions Award** and was selected as one of the **70 exemplary charity leaders in the UK**. He was also recognised along with the charity for his 'outstanding' efforts during the pandemic, receiving a '**special recognition**' award from the late Queen. We were delighted when Ken was recognised by the King in the New Year's Honours List 2024, and made an **OBE for 'services to Education, Charity and Down Syndrome'**.

**Trustee Alice Osborne** is a qualified social worker with over 18 years of experience in the field of disability holding a master's degree in the Applied Psychology of Intellectual Disability. She became a member of Portsmouth DSA eight years ago following the birth of her son, Ted. After several years as an active volunteer, Alice took on the part-time paid role of **Charity Centre Manager**, while continuing to generously contribute many additional hours on a voluntary basis.

We were delighted to welcome Alice to the **Board of Trustees** last year in a voluntary capacity, as permitted by our charity constitution. Her appointment has strengthened the connection between staff and trustees, providing valuable insight, continuity, and a direct link



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to day-to-day operations. Alice's professional expertise and unwavering commitment continue to enhance the strategic direction and effectiveness of the charity.

In her ongoing staff role, Alice manages our **membership services**, welcomes new families, and leads our **community liaison team**, with a particular focus on educating and training health professionals and volunteers across the UK. Alice's work plays a vital role in improving how professionals support new families from the point of diagnosis and with her knowledge, passion, and leadership, we have been able to grow our community network and launch a series of new initiatives aimed at **improving maternity outcomes** for families and individuals with Down syndrome.

**Trustee Simon Brock** comes from a senior banking background and brings his expert knowledge of business and finance to the charity.

We were delighted to appoint two new highly experienced Trustees in March:

**Trustee Greg Jones KC** is a **former patron** of Portsmouth DSA until becoming a Trustee, and a long-time supporter of the charity. His roles include being a **well-respected Alderman and Sheriff of the City of London**, as well as serving as the **Chancellor of the Diocese of Manchester**.

**Trustee Spencer Pitfield OBE** supports strategic leadership and management, with **expertise spanning politics, education, SMEs and the environmental sector**. He was a **councillor and magistrate** for 16 years, and former **CEO of Paces Charity**, Sheffield. Spencer was awarded an **OBE by Prince William in 2016 for 'Political Service'**.

We warmly welcome both Greg and Spencer to the team and look forward to working with them and benefitting from their vast experience and expertise.

### Management and Admin Team

We have a very small but hardworking and dedicated management and admin team, who work alongside Rachael, Ken and Alice.

At Portsmouth DSA we fully recognise the positive impact regular social opportunities have on our families. Our talented events officer **Stacey Brooks** was a long-standing volunteer on the events team before stepping up to take over the role of part-time **Events Manager**. Stacey now plans and organises a wealth of exciting social opportunities and events for our members, supported by our charity volunteers, as well as coordinating the junior social activity evenings.

**Catherine Crook**, co-founder of Portsmouth DSA, has been actively volunteering for the charity since inception. She is also employed for five hours a week as the charity's **Social Communication Group Manager** ensuring our teenage communication sessions run seamlessly throughout the year.

**Hannah Smith** is employed in the role of Charity Administrator, helping to ensure our centre runs smoothly. Hannah has volunteered for the charity from early childhood and has always supported our Great South Run team, either participating herself or supporting our runners with DS and LD. She has also been an active volunteer at our Special Olympic sessions for many years, winning the **Portsmouth Young Volunteer of the Year Award 2024**. Hannah's

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positive attitude, creative skills and adaptability have made her an invaluable asset to our team.

The Board and management team are actively supported by a dedicated group of charity **practitioners**, along with the **Parent and Community Liaison Team**, **Events Team**, and **Social Media and IT Team**. In addition, we benefit from the ongoing support of member volunteers and individuals from the wider community, many of whom have generously given their time and expertise for several years. Each of these contributors plays a vital role in the charity's success, and their commitment and service are deeply valued.

### Awards and Acknowledgements

#### The Queen's Award – the MBE for Charities

**Portsmouth DSA is very proud to have Royal Approval and freedom of the City of Portsmouth** It is always wonderful when the charity receives recognition for the hard work and achievements of its governance team, practitioners, volunteers and members.

We were greatly honoured when Portsmouth DSA was awarded the **Queen's Award** for outstanding service in 2021. This award is the equivalent of the MBE for charities; the highest accolade for exemplary service for charities, which is awarded for life. The **Deputy Lord-Lieutenant** who nominated us said we were selected from thousands of organisations, and the national judges were immensely impressed with our 'exceptional' work.

Charity Chairperson Rachael Ross MBE said, *"We are extremely proud that the work of our outstanding team has been recognised by Her Majesty the Queen, and that our charity now has Royal Approval. Our volunteers work very hard, but it's hugely rewarding, and we never fail to be amazed by all the children can achieve. This award is a tribute to the dedication of our brilliant team of trustees, staff and volunteers, our wonderful families, and the local community whose collective efforts and support have helped to make a real and positive difference to the lives of children with Down syndrome."*

We were further honoured by **HM the Queen** and the **Royal Voluntary Service** with **The Queen's Covid Special Recognition Award 2021** nominated by the **Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire** for outstanding work for the community during the COVID pandemic.

We were delighted to have been granted the prestigious **Freedom of the City of Portsmouth** by the Lord Mayor this year, for our **'phenomenal support for the community and to recognise dedication, self-sacrifice, skill and hard work by those who supported the community during the COVID pandemic'**.

### Additional Awards and Acknowledgments

We were incredibly proud to receive the **Shaping Portsmouth Education Award** in 2020, recognising our *outstanding contribution to education in the region*. The previous year, we were thrilled to win the **Persimmon Homes Best Educational UK Charity Award**, standing out among more than 3,500 national and local charities and securing a £100,000 grant to support our new centre. In 2023, we were honoured to be named the runner-up in the prestigious **National Diversity Awards**.



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Chair, Rachael, and former Trustee Lucy Field have previously been awarded the **Points of Light Award** by No.10 Downing Street and former PM, David Cameron, in recognition of outstanding charity work. Rachael was also awarded the prestigious **Portsmouth Civic Award for Services to Education and Down Syndrome** in 2018, presented by the Lord Mayor of Portsmouth. In 2019 the charity's work was further spotlighted when Chairperson Rachael was made an **MBE by the Queen for services to education and the field of Down syndrome**. In 2024, Trustee Ken was made an **OBE for services to charity, education and down syndrome advocacy**.

Three of our members received national recognition for their 'outstanding' and 'exemplary' work in their communities. In June 2023 Rachael and Ken were recognised as two of 70 UK **Platinum Jubilee Champions** with medals presented by King Charles and Queen Camilla. We were also delighted that Charity Manager Alice was selected from thousands to be a **Coronation Champion** in 2023 by Queen Camilla.

Charity ambassador Max received the **Portsmouth Inspirational Men 'Inspiring Young Man Award'** in 2022, and was appointed as a **Queen's Baton Bearer** in the baton relay to herald the Commonwealth Games 2022.

Our administrator Hannah was awarded **Young Volunteer of the Year 2024**, for her sustained contribution to the charity sector.

Three of our volunteers, Katherine Bull, Jenny Beard and Siva Ramaraj received well deserved **Inspiring Portsmouth Volunteer** certificates from Portsmouth City Council.

These awards are a testament to the dedication and hard work of the Portsmouth DSA community, shining a light on the efforts of our volunteers. While no one volunteers in pursuit of recognition, it is incredibly meaningful when their contributions are acknowledged and celebrated.

Beyond individual recognition, these awards have played an important role in raising awareness about Down syndrome and have significantly enhanced the charity's public profile. This increased visibility has had a positive impact on fundraising, community engagement, and support for our ongoing work.

### **Official Charity Opening by HRH Prince Edward, Duke of Edinburgh**

After extensive delays caused by the COVID pandemic, and subsequent delayed refurbishment works, we were delighted to finally relocate to our wonderful new centre in 2023. This modern facility not only meets our charity's growing needs but also enhances our capability to expand our services, for the first time enabling us to employ an onsite administrator, further streamlining our operations. Our new centre features expansive office space, a large kitchen, dual therapy rooms enabling simultaneous sessions, an interactive sensory room, a spacious teenage room, and a generous family space where we have hosted a highly successful party celebrating the King's Coronation, as well as our coffee mornings and community meetings.

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We were thrilled last year when the His Royal Highness Prince Edward the Duke of Edinburgh visited our centre to officially open our new centre with other prestigious guests including the Lord Mayor of Portsmouth and the Lord Lieutenant. The Duke enjoyed a tour of our building and chatting with our young people, families and supporters. The Duke said,



***“Thank you so much for inviting me here today. I know that Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association has been at the leading edge for a long time, and I’m delighted to hear about all your new projects and initiatives. It’s been lovely to meet you all and to get a glimpse of the brilliant work you are all doing here.”***

**HRH Prince Edward, Duke of Edinburgh**

### **Activities**

Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association remains committed to improving the lives of children with Down syndrome and their families by providing invaluable support and friendship, as well as essential services and training. We continue to directly support families, schools, education professionals and health professionals in Hampshire, and the surrounding counties of Dorset, West Sussex and Wiltshire. We continue to receive further requests for support and information from across the UK and internationally, from individuals, support groups, health and education professionals and a variety of organisations.

In the current economic climate, many families are finding it increasingly difficult to access specialist services, with more cuts looming on the horizon. As a result, our charity has seen a steady rise in enquiries, particularly from families living further afield where there may be less access to specialist services and support. We’ve also seen a notable increase in contact from education professionals, as well as health and social care professionals, seeking advice and support.

Over the past few years, it has been reassuring to see a rise in the number of new support groups and the expansion of services offered by established ones. Unlike other organisations, we do not operate within set boundaries and have never turned a family away. However, we recognise that distance can present real challenges to engagement. To help address this, we continue to signpost families to their nearest support group, where available, so they can make informed choices, and we also signpost them towards other relevant services.

Many of these alternative groups have used the Portsmouth DSA services model and have asked for advice from our trustees and practitioners, and some have attended our sessions and training for guidance. We are proud to be able to share our skills, experience and knowledge in such a positive way, and we actively encourage all support groups to do the same.

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Our social activities include coffee and information mornings, social events, information sessions and our very popular seasonal parties.

We also provide a wide range of specialist health, social and educational services to families and related organisations across Portsmouth, Hampshire, surrounding counties and beyond. These activities usually include our New Family Support Service, Baby Support Groups, Early Development Groups, Makaton Learn and Play, Makaton Signing for adults, Communication Groups, Social Communication Groups, our Teenage Buddy Initiative and an extensive Education Advisory Service for schools, nurseries and further education colleges. These services are progressive and comprehensive, starting from the point of diagnosis which increasingly can be prenatally, and provide support for the child and their family throughout their time in education.

Accompanying the services are specialist training packages which are often bespoke to meet the specific needs of our young people, parents and related professionals. This year we have been delighted to receive invitations to train a wide variety of professionals including teaching and support staff, doctors, maternity nurses and midwives, Integrated Care Boards, social workers, healthcare students and GPs as well as parents and school students.

We continue to **support families seeking asylum in the UK** and families from all backgrounds, and our volunteers have risen to the challenge, going above and beyond to ensure that individuals were warmly welcomed and continue to have the necessary resources and support they need, or that virtual advice is given to the relevant professionals.

### Ukrainian Partnership

We were proud to be the first and only organisation to reach out to frontline **Down syndrome groups in Ukraine** and offer practical, hands-on support and friendship at the outbreak of the war in those areas most impacted. Since then, we have continued to nurture our valued partnerships with several Down syndrome organisations across Ukraine including Poltava, Kharkiv, Zhytomyr, Kyiv, Zaporizhzhia, and Vinnytsia. This ongoing collaboration has been made possible through the support of our humanitarian aid partners **Vans Without Borders**, who play a vital role in facilitating and strengthening these vital connections.

## Comprehensive Specialist Support from the Point of Diagnosis Through to Adulthood

### Specialist Services

Portsmouth DSA provides the best and most extensive programme of specialist social and educational support in the UK available at no charge, delivered by leading experts in Down syndrome. It is a comprehensive and progressive package that starts from the point of diagnosis, and continues throughout childhood and beyond, offering support in all areas of social and educational need for young people, their families and related professionals.

### Pre-natal and Post-natal Support

We have found that developments in ante-natal screening have led to an increase in pre-natal diagnoses, leading to an increase in the number of families and professionals contacting us at this time. Our Parent and Community Liaison Team offers support and information from the point of diagnosis for families and professionals.

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## Down Syndrome Specific Maternity Pathways

After many years of dedicated advocacy, Portsmouth DSA's training programme has played a pivotal role in establishing a collaboration with Portsmouth University Hospital, one of the UK's largest acute hospital trusts, serving over half a million patients annually. Working closely with their Midwifery Screening, Fetal Medicine, Infant Feeding, Neonatal, Paediatric and Community Teams, Portsmouth DSA has co developed the region's first Down Syndrome Specific Maternity Pathway. After positive feedback, another hospital has approached Portsmouth DSA to collaborate on a similar initiative. These tailored pathways are designed to improve the parental experience, enhance clinical outcomes, reduce birth-related mortality, and provide all involved with clear, unbiased, and up-to-date guidance.

You can read more about our work here in our maternity casestudy to be **featured in the Down Syndrome Act Guidance** : [Portsmouth-DSA-New-Parent-Maternity-Pathway-Casestudy-.pdf](#)

We are optimistic that these specialised pathways will raise awareness in the medical community, combat measurably poorer maternity outcomes and higher rates of stillbirth for babies with Down syndrome, improve services for families, enhance quality of care and help ensure clear and consistent support for families, with better life outcomes. We continue to work in positive partnership with hospitals.

## Parent and Community Liaison Initiative



We are very proud of the links **Alice Osborne** and our community team have nurtured with hospitals, and health professionals, and Portsmouth DSA is very much the 'go to' organisation when advice is needed about Down syndrome specific interventions.

**Our Community Liaison Initiative** includes a comprehensive support system for new parents from the point of diagnosis. Professionals supporting the family now make an automatic referral to Portsmouth DSA with the family's permission. Our team make contact with new families in hospital, at home and/or at our centre to answer any questions and offer advice and support. The

team also regularly works with midwives, nurses, paediatricians, GPs, health visitors, social workers, portage workers and other relevant health professionals to ensure they have the information and training they need to effectively support families and colleagues.

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Our **Parent Welcome Pack** is distributed to maternity units and hospitals in the region and continues to be very well received by new families. A world-leading toy manufacturer are also impressed with our support pack and continue to support the initiative by donating a soft toy for each new family for inclusion.

Supporting literature is distributed to health professionals including our '**Delivering a Diagnosis of Down Syndrome**' and '**Positive Language**' advising how best to deliver a positive diagnosis and what language is best to use when considering Down syndrome.

Our programme offers bespoke training to health professionals including our '**Down Syndrome Today**' training and to date our team has had the pleasure of delivering training to thousands of midwives, paediatricians, GPs, maternity nurses, health visitors, social workers and other related professionals, always with 100% positive feedback.

The initiative continues to be a big success especially as families are now automatically sign-posted/referred to us by professionals. We continue to receive excellent feedback from parents and health professionals about our initiative:

*"After your amazing talk, I took the learning points back to my practice and we've updated our annual reviews for patients with Down syndrome. Already patients and relatives have given great feedback and we have picked up hypoparathyroidism in the first week in a new patient to our practice who had never had a review with his previous GP, so a massive thank you".*  
(GP, Hampshire)

*"Portsmouth DSA have helped us immensely over the last year since we had our prenatal diagnosis. The support provided by their visits, alongside meeting families were without doubt the main reason we were able make the decision to continue with the pregnancy."*  
(PDSA Parent 2023)

*"If you're worried about getting a diagnosis you won't look back once you join Portsmouth Down syndrome Association. It's such an amazing place that does so much. They have really helped me to feel normal and understand it's ok to have the bad days as we've all been there. It's a family I never knew I needed."* (PDSA Parent, 2024)

*"PDSA provides wonderful personal and practical advice to children and their families, right from the point of diagnosis. As a group of paediatricians, we have also benefited from some fantastic teaching provided by the charity. Forging a closer link between medical staff and the PDSA will undoubtedly enhance the experience for young people with Downs syndrome."*  
James Hammond, Paediatric Registrar, Wessex

*"PDSA guidelines are a great resource to help the neonatal team support the families in those wonderful and challenging first few days of life. 35 neonatal nursery nurses from the Thames Valley and Wessex Neonatal Network had the privilege of listening to PDSA representatives in a recent conference run by the Neonatal unit in Portsmouth. This session touched us all and had a very positive influence in the way we think about children with Down syndrome."*  
Susi Hill, Practice Educator, Neonatal Intensive Care Unit QAH



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## Baby Support Groups

Parents receive support from the point of diagnosis, and this support follows seamlessly after birth.



Portsmouth DSA **Baby Support Groups** are delivered by our expert practitioners and offer a comprehensive support system for parents and infants up to 18 months old. These sessions provide crucial guidance on the healthcare services and routine check-ups that parents should expect, outline the benefits available to them, and offer assistance with the completion of application forms. Furthermore, parents receive tailored advice on various aspects of child development and are introduced to effective activities that can be practiced at home to foster their child's growth and development.

Crucially, parents are introduced to other families and are encouraged to form their own network of support. Many of our families have lasting friendships that have spanned 16 years or more.

## Learn and Play Sensory Sessions

Our **Learn and Play Sensory Sessions** are for pre-school families and are designed to introduce stimulating play and learning environments with an emphasis on sensory play to activate the child's senses in a fun and relaxed setting. These sessions are delivered by **Alice Osborne** and supported by volunteers, meaning that our staff are free to chat with parents, offer advice and answer any questions they might have. We are delighted to continue our collaboration with experienced Makaton teacher, Ros Keeble, and **Makaton** continues to play an important role in the sessions including singing and signing. When time allows, we also offer Makaton Signing classes for parents and professionals.

## New Sensory Room

Our new interactive sensory room was completed last year. This innovative space is dedicated to supporting early brain cognitive development and sensory exploration. Featuring a range of stimulating experiences—from soft lighting and soothing sounds to tactile activities and vibrant visuals—our sensory room offers a safe and engaging environment for infants to explore, grow and have fun.

Each element of the room is tailored to nurture the developmental needs of young children, helping to boost motor skills, enhance sensory perception, and promote emotional well-being. Our sensory room provides an ideal setting for infants to reach important early milestones while also offering parents a unique opportunity to engage in meaningful play with their infants in a safe space.



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## Early Development Groups

Early intervention sessions have proved to be invaluable for our pre-school children, teaching them a wide range of skills to enable them to achieve their early developmental

milestones, and help prepare them for school. The groups provide regular structured activities which cover areas such as speech and language, reading, cognitive development, early number work, social skills and fine and gross motor skill development. These sessions are provided monthly for the children who are under 24 months, and then increase to fortnightly. Parents and their associated professionals are also invited to attend termly twilight training sessions covering a range of relevant topics, which this year have included 'early numeracy skills', 'encouraging positive social skills and managing behaviour' and 'fine play and motor skills'. As

well as parents, we encourage associated professionals to attend.

Specialist resources are utilised including **Numicon** equipment. Parents are encouraged to continue activities with their children at home to increase effectiveness. The sessions not only benefit the children who take part, but also parents can experience new methods and resources which will support their child's development. Groups consist of only three or four children to enable maximum learning to take place. Our pre-school services are coordinated by Charity Manager **Alice Osborne**.

Thank you to the **Boshier-Hinton Foundation** and **Moneybarn** who provided donations to help fund our pre-school learning this year.

## Communication Groups

There is a national shortage of specialist Speech and Language Therapists and after struggling once again to replace our therapist who left us due to family bereavement, last year we decided to take steps to train our own co-worker to deliver our **Communication Groups** with support from Symbol UK and Portsmouth DSA practitioners. We welcomed Elena Ryabinova to the team who delivers these weekend monthly groups for school age children aged 4 – 11.

These Communication Groups, are the next educational phase building on the foundation skills developed in our Early Development Groups. Groups consist of three or four children with a focus on interaction and communication skills, with targets and activities set to practise at home throughout the month. Interventional strategies are used to support all areas of development, and aim to improve speaking and listening, language, reading and social skills.

Thank you to **the Hants and Isle of Wight Community Fund (HIWCF)** who provided an inclusion grant to help support our sessions.

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### Social Communication Groups

Children progress from Communication Groups to our teenage **Social Communication Groups** once they reach secondary school age. The format for these groups for our senior members (aged 11 upwards) has evolved to consider their changing needs as they get older and have been extremely successful. These groups are larger, and more informal with a maximum of 10 individuals. Parents are not present, and the young people take on more responsibility for their session; they set up the room and decide which topics they would like to discuss, they use iPads & iPhones, but the sessions continue to develop their speech, language, conversation and social skills in a safe environment.

These monthly sessions are coordinated by **Catherine Crook**, and led by our co-workers **Tracy Leason** and **Danni Frances**. Tracy has an abundance of experience delivering SALT programmes and has worked with children with DS and SEND in an educational setting. Co-worker Danni who works alongside Tracy, has experience of working with young people with a learning disability and Down syndrome and is currently working as a part-time teaching assistant whilst studying for a BA in Education, Special Needs and Disability at Chichester University. Both Danni and Tracy are well liked by the teenagers. Our Communication Groups and Social Communication Groups have been overseen by **Leela Baksi (Symbol UK)** specialist Speech and Language Therapist. The young people enjoy attending and the sessions and they continue to be popular with our members, offering invaluable social opportunities.

### Our Unique Buddy Initiative – Special Partnership with King Edward VI School

We have developed strong links with many schools in the region including **King Edward VI School (KES)** who have been active supporters of our charity over past years, and who often participate in our Down Syndrome awareness celebrations each year.

We know that our young people often don't access the same social opportunities as their peers and are at real risk of social isolation. We have been delighted to continue our exciting **Buddy Partnership** which is now in its sixth year with some older students from King Edward VI School who join us for our Teenage Social Communication Group outings with the aim of developing friendships and social skills.

The partnership has been hugely successful, and the students and our teenagers have embraced the opportunity to engage with massive benefits to all taking part.

## Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association

Outings have included swimming, ski-slope donutting, and our ever-popular barn dance.



It has been wonderful to watch the friendships developing throughout the year.

The academic year's partnership ended in a successful summer camp at the end of August at King Edward VI School, where pupils and our teenagers took part in fun activities, and outings including trips to the zoo and a theme park.

We were delighted to invite KES along to our centre opening this year where our teenagers showcased our wonderful buddy initiative to **HRH the Duke of Edinburgh**.

*"It is a real pleasure and privilege for King Edward VI School to be partner in a long-standing relationship with Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association. Through numerous activities and social events, PDSA members and KES students form deep and meaningful bonds, and in doing so help one another to grow and learn. It would be very easy to assume that the benefits of this scheme are targeted solely at nurturing the young people from PDSA, but the truth is that the learning gained by KES students is equally profound. This is one of our longest and most cherished partnerships."* **Neal Parker, Head, King Edward VI School**

*"I love going to Marwell Zoo and Paultons Park. I love making friends with Nadia and the others and doing things without mum and dad. I feel safe. I love spending time with my mates from PDSA & KES, we do really cool stuff and have fun."* **PDSA Teenager**

*"PDSA means I get to enjoy fun activities monthly with new friends, and I love seeing the enjoyment that every single person gets out of it. It was a wonderful experience I learned so much and made so many great friendships and happy memories - I can't wait for next summer!"* **KES Student**

We would like to thank everyone at KES for working with us in a partnership enabling us to provide such an exciting and unique opportunity for our teenagers.

Thank you to Jody and **Percussion Play**, who generously continue to sponsor our Teenage Buddy Initiative and to the **Boshier-Hinton Foundation** for their grant to help support our SCGs and buddy initiative

### Flagship School, College and Nursery Education Specialist Advisory Service

Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association worked hard to create and develop our leading **School, College and Nursery Advisory Service**, Directed by **Rachael Ross MBE**, it is now in its sixteenth year, and we believe it is the best and most comprehensive example of its kind in the UK.

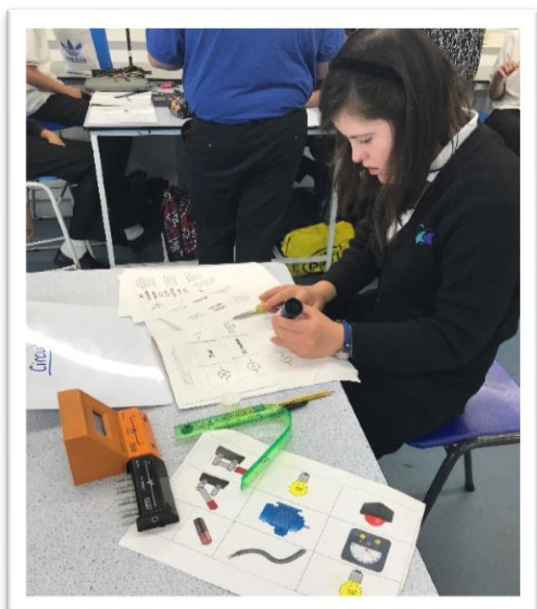


## Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association

Our programme supports the successful inclusion of our members across more than 100 educational establishments across the south. We are proud to have now supported some of our older members consistently throughout their education from nursery all the way through to further education and beyond. We have seen the advantages of this sustained intervention are manifold, including early identification and intervention for emerging issues, smoother transitions between educational stages, a higher rate of successful mainstream inclusion, and enhanced social and academic outcomes overall.

We receive enquiries from non-member schools and schools in neighbouring counties as awareness about the service spreads. The service is in high demand, and we operate waiting lists.

This bespoke support service is a comprehensive package covering all aspects of education, assessment, development and inclusion, individualised to meet the needs of the student and school. The student is visited in the school setting once a term, and school staff and parents receive advice in all areas of development including successful differentiation and teaching strategies, individual assessment and target setting. An annual report is provided to support the student's educational needs in their Annual Review.



The package includes remote support for parents and staff throughout the year, as well as bespoke training and a trouble-shooting service to address any issues which might arise over the year.

This is our most expensive service, and as more of our members reach senior school age, service provision in this area is expected to grow rapidly, which will impact on the charity's costs.

Whilst many primary schools have previously benefited from our support and have had experience of teaching a child with DS, this still remains a largely unfamiliar area for the majority of senior schools.

Careful consideration has been given to this, and the service has been adapted accordingly. The **Senior School Advisory Package** includes transition support, one full day visit a term, with additional twilight training or feedback after the visit, and each new school also receives an additional training session at the start of the term, or just prior to this.

Several termly training sessions are also included in the outreach programme on a variety of relevant topics across all age groups including pre-school. Training is delivered by our expert practitioners or experts in the field of Down syndrome. This year, as well as our **annual DS overview and learning profile training**, we have featured topics including ‘**Support with School Transition**’, ‘**Differentiating the Curriculum**’, ‘**Supporting Social Inclusion**’, ‘**Scaffolding Friendships, RSE and Digital Safety**’ and we have equipped schools with useful resources, films and toolkits to facilitate inclusion.

## Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association

All training is relevant and based on up-to-date and evidence-based research, and we are very pleased to note that our training evaluation sheets continue to be 100% positive, with over 99% of replies rating our training as 'excellent'.

Last year, we made the decision to review our training model, and fully open our training to a much wider audience. We were delighted when representatives from Hampshire County Council and Portsmouth City Council joined us for a variety of sessions. We have been delighted to have previously been joined by the SEND County Inspector, who attended our inclusion training. She was very impressed with the session and has since been actively recommending our services to schools.

Our chairperson and director of education Rachael has contributed to the **Hampshire Inspection and Advisory Service SEND Publication** which was circulated to all schools in the county. Our guidance has also been featured in the national **Times Educational Supplement** with a circulation of 59,000 as well as online coverage.

Having our work showcased in this way is a great opportunity for us to raise the profile of DS and the charity, and to spread our important message direct to schools and teaching staff who do not automatically receive the training they need to successfully include our children.

Feedback has continued to show that our Nursery Advisory Service and Nursery Twilight Training Service remains very popular with our pre-school parents and related professionals. Although the training takes place outside of working hours in the evening, the courses are always full. Again, feedback has been 100% positive.

The School, College and Nursery Service has provided an excellent PR opportunity for the charity and has helped us develop and maintain strong links with the school communities with many of these schools holding fundraising or awareness days on our behalf particularly during Down Syndrome Awareness Week in March. We have been able to offer schools a variety of resources for their awareness celebrations, including new PowerPoint assemblies for junior and secondary age groups.

The charity has previously invested time into exploring alternative accreditations and exam courses which are more suitable for our young people, some of these had not been accessed previously and will offer more choice and opportunities, in particular the **WJEC examinations** board portfolio of alternative qualifications known as the Entry Pathways.

The attraction of these qualifications for schools and pupils is that its prescribed content is more flexible allowing schools to more easily include a pupil in a GCSE class, and schools can more easily dual enter pupils for examinations. We have produced advice literature for parents and professionals about all the options available, and an explanatory training session for schools (and parents). Our practitioners have allocated extra time to work with the relevant schools, to explain more about the options available and to help them plan. Our schools have been keen to explore these alternative pathways and they have embraced our training and guidance. These alternative options have revolutionised exam possibilities for our teenagers and can also be of benefit to other pupils in the school community, and as our eldest cohort of pupils reach exam age, they are leaving school with GCSEs and more meaningful qualifications.

# Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association

This year the charity partnered with some of our schools to produce **Down syndrome specific case studies** at the request of the **Department for Education**, with the intention of including them in the forthcoming **Down Syndrome Act Guidance**.

You can view our case studies here: [Case Studies - Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association](#)

We were very grateful to receive donations towards our school service from the **Landsec Futures Community Grant**, **The Mercers' Company** and **The Syder Foundation**, and a substantial grant from the **Bailey Thomas Charitable Foundation**. We thank them for their valued support.

## Our Education Practitioners

Our services are all delivered by experienced and highly qualified experts in the field of Down syndrome. **Kate Milford** is our in-house education manager. Kate has more than twenty years' experience teaching in mainstream secondary schools, most recently as Assistant Headteacher and SENCo with responsibility for inclusion. In this role she has gained a wealth of experience, delivering training on a range of special educational needs and supporting teachers to differentiate their curricula. Kate has first-hand knowledge and experience of strategies which can be implemented to allow students with Down Syndrome to flourish both socially and academically, whilst also developing independent skills in preparation for adulthood. Kate has been an asset to the team.

**Allison Powell** has a background in secondary education, and further trained as a specialist advisory teacher with Down Syndrome Education International. Allison co-delivers our Junior and Senior School Advisory Service and Training Programme, and is a recognised authority on the education of children with Down syndrome, formerly working with Ups and Downs, Southwest. Allison has worked to develop a training programme and supporting literature to advise schools and parents on alternative accreditations and exam pathways which best enable our young people to gain a wide range of recognised qualifications at school and our senior school pupils are reaping the rewards of this and are studying for and gaining meaningful qualifications enabling greater options at further education level.

**Becky Baxter** (LETS Go!, formerly Down Syndrome Education International) has over 22 years' experience working with children with Down syndrome. She is also a qualified speech and language therapist, specialising in Down syndrome, and is the Chair of the Clinical Excellence Network for Down Syndrome. Becky co-delivers our Early Development Groups, Nursery and Infant School Advisory Service along with practitioners **Sarah Holton**, **Sam Wood**, **Tracy Nye** and **Kate Dale**. Becky and her team have been working with Portsmouth DSA since 2009.

Our Head Patron, **Professor Sue Buckley OBE**, is one of the foremost global experts in education and development for children with Down syndrome, and for well over 47 years, her pioneering work has been enabling children with DS to reach their full potential. Sue is always ready to offer her friendship and expert advice to the group.

We are fortunate and very excited to continue to work with some of the top educationalists and DS experts in the UK, and the world.



# Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association

## Creating and Supporting Unique Community Initiatives

### Special eye clinic partnership



We were very proud to have been instrumental in the establishment of **England's first Down syndrome specialist eye clinic at Portsmouth University**, offering highly specialist services for children and adults. Our team collaborated to provide comprehensive training for staff and devised a differentiated programme enhancing the accessibility and effectiveness of eyecare services for individuals with Down syndrome. The clinic was in high demand, with families travelling from counties across the south of England to access these services.

Unfortunately, the clinic was a victim of the post-COVID slump as the clinic failed to secure continued funding from the university as funds were diverted. Families were devastated when the clinic closed its doors, but we were delighted to support the relocation of many of the staff and specialist equipment to a nearby local opticians **Percy Harrisons** offering the same specialist care, and we continue our positive partnership with them.

### Music Man Project Portsmouth

In September, we were thrilled to have partnered with the national **Music Man Project UK** to launch **Music Man Project Portsmouth**, our regional branch of this inspiring initiative.

Open to anyone aged 11 and up with Down syndrome or a learning disability, the weekly sessions held at our charity centre, provide accessible music experiences and inclusive performance opportunities for all abilities.

Blending the core Music Man Project programme with some of our own creative touches, each session features music, movement, signing, and percussion. The sessions are delivered by practitioner **Emma Bannister Palmer** who brings a wealth of experience and enthusiasm as a music teacher and musician, managed by **Rachael Ross**, and supported by our fantastic **volunteers**.

The journey builds toward a televised performance at the **Royal Albert Hall**, bringing together regional groups from across the country, currently planned for **April 2026** (date to be confirmed).

***"Great session this evening. We truly enjoyed it. Lately, my son has been more withdrawn, less verbal, and struggling with increased anxiety. The MMPP sessions have been incredible - like therapy for him. We're hopeful they'll help guide him back from wherever he's retreated, and we'll see our beautiful, happy boy shine through again."***  
Parent 2025

Thank you to the **Music Man Project** and the **Axis Foundation** for their generous grants to support the Music Man Project Portsmouth.

# Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association

## Social Events and Parties

Many children with a learning disability do not have the same access to social opportunities as their peers, and families can feel socially isolated. We encourage our families to develop their own network of support, and our social events and parties remain of key importance to provide families providing opportunities to come together, have fun make friends and share experiences.

Events over the past financial year have included our Titchfield Railway Day and Picnic generously hosted by the **Fareham and District Society of Model Engineers**; our very popular Easter party where children characters and received chocolate eggs donated by **Asda, Sainsburys and Tesco** and soft toys donated by **TY Toys** who have supported our event for many years; a spooky Halloween party supported by the **Royal Navy**; and a very successful outdoor activity evening at **Fairthorne Manor** where children are given the opportunity to take part in activities such as kayaking, archery and climbing. All our events are extremely popular and well attended. Our Christmas Party in December was another big success. The **Events Team** once again excelled themselves with this event, making an amazing Santa's Grotto and hosting a fantastic party for the younger children.

Portsmouth DSA knows how to throw a good party, and the biggest thanks must go to our amazing **volunteers** led by our events manager **Stacey Brooks**, who every year go above and beyond to ensure our members have access to these amazing social opportunities.

Thank you to **Jazz Apple** for their donation towards our events, and the **Zurich Challenge Team** for their donations towards our Fairthorne Activity Evening and social events, and to their volunteer team for regularly donating time to support our coffee mornings and weeding our front car park.

## Volunteers

We encourage a community spirit within our membership, and a good percentage of our members volunteer either on a regular or ad hoc basis. We estimated that over 600 volunteers formed part of our cheer teams or supported our event over the Great South Run weekend in addition to over 300 runners. The outstanding **Rapid Relief Team** of volunteers once again generously donated time on the day, along with refreshments and food for all our supporters. Our families and the Events Team regularly volunteer to support collections and other charity activities.

We are fortunate that we have a strong core of volunteers who support regularly who are parents and members of the community, and everyone is very welcome to join any of our support teams, or volunteer on an ad hoc basis.

We have regular volunteers who help run our coffee mornings for parents and members of the community, and also an events team of volunteers who help plan and organise our many social and fundraising events. These teams included members from the wider community, as well as parents. Their support has been invaluable, and this has allowed us to timetable extra awareness events and fundraisers with our charity partners this year. Our charity is largely operated by volunteers, and we are very grateful to everyone for their support.

In 2021 we were honoured by the Queen who awarded the charity the **Queen's Award for Voluntary Service; the highest accolade any charity can receive**, and the equivalent to an MBE. This award is part of the UK honours system and awarded in recognition of '**sustained excellence and outstanding contribution to the community**' and is awarded for life.

# Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association

It is credit to our inspirational leadership team, all of whom are full or part-time volunteers themselves, and our wonderful army of volunteer supporters. We were also delighted to receive an additional **Special COVID Recognition** honour for our work during the COVID pandemic. Each volunteer was proud to receive an individual **Queen's Award certificate** and a **Special Covid Recognition Certificate**, and this number included some of our teenagers with Down syndrome and their older siblings.

## Safeguarding

We take the issue of safeguarding our children very seriously. Trustees and service providers have been approved by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) which has replaced the Criminal Records Bureau disclosure (CRB checks). Using the DBS update service, these records are checked regularly for any changes by our elected Safeguarding Officer who has attended safeguarding training and shared relevant information with charity staff and volunteers. Key charity staff and volunteers have also attended safeguarding and first aid training. We have a Safeguarding Policy with all relevant supporting documents and all trustees and relevant staff, practitioners and volunteers are familiar with this document and are aware of procedure should there be any concerns.

## Fundraising, Awareness and Community Support

### The Great South Run

With the support of our volunteers and Events Team, we have organised several fundraising events over the past academic year, including the **Great South Run** in October. The run takes place annually in Portsmouth, and we continue to take advantage of its location to make it one of our largest annual fundraisers. Participant numbers have not yet recovered to pre-COVID levels, but we had a large team of over 300 entrants in all runs and remain the best represented regional charity to take part. This was a great PR opportunity to spread awareness about the charity to the wider community, and we received some very positive feedback from the organisers and members of the public. It was wonderful to see our green army of charity vests, and some of our runners were featured on the local news and radio.

In particular, we were thrilled with the number of under 18s who turned out on the Saturday to support us, including many of our children, as well as athletes from the **SE Hants Special Olympic Team** who joined us for the 5k for the fourth year running. We also had a huge team of volunteers as usual who encouraged runners at various cheer points around the course.

Sadly, the Great South 10-mile run was cancelled due to bad weather, but we were overwhelmed by the huge number of runners who undertook their own independent 10-mile run so that the charity did not lose their sponsorship, including the intrepid North Harbour team who completed the challenge in the wind and rain, supported by their families. As a result we were delighted that the total sponsorship raised was not impacted, and one of our best totals in recent years.

We were very grateful to the **Rapid Relief Team** who once again provided free hot food and refreshments to hundreds of children, families, runners and supporters on Saturday, and to the **Great South Run organisers** who continue to donate a free marquee for our families on Saturday.

# Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association

## Down Syndrome Awareness Week Celebrations

Our annual Down Syndrome Awareness Week took place in March, supported once again by our dedicated social media awareness campaign. We are especially grateful to local solicitors **Warner Goodman**, who generously sponsored the campaign for the fourteenth consecutive year. Their continued support enabled us to reach a significantly wider audience.

As in previous years, the celebrations were warmly embraced by the community. Schools, hospitals, businesses, and individuals participated by hosting awareness assemblies, special events, and fundraising activities. Our popular '**Rock Your Socks**' campaign received widespread support across the region.

Highlights of the week included a visit from the ever-popular **Singing Hands** and the **Lord Mayor of Portsmouth**, and our annual rock gig at the **Spinnaker Tower**, featuring the band **Uncovered**, who kindly donate their time and talent to the charity.

## Inaugural Portsmouth DSA Community Awards

The theme of this year's Down Syndrome Awareness Week celebrations was 'Improve Our Support Systems', and while we acknowledge there is much work to be done, we also wanted to take the opportunity to celebrate examples of good practice and thank those professionals in our community who embrace our partnership and go above and beyond.

Generously hosted by the **Lord Mayor of Portsmouth** at **Portsmouth Guildhall**, the evening celebrated the exceptional contributions of community professionals, partner schools, and our dedicated volunteers, including some of our remarkable teenagers. Awards were presented by prominent members of the community, alongside our teenage volunteers, who played an outstanding role throughout the event. We would like to offer our congratulations to all this year's award winners. The evening was a resounding success and served to further strengthen our connection with both the local community and our members.

Thank you to the **Warner Goodman LLP** for generously sponsoring our awards evening, and further congratulations for being the deserving recipient of our '**Outstanding Charity Partnership**' award.

Other key fundraisers included our annual **HMS Warrior 1860 Black-tie Dinner and Auction** in November and our **T21 Sponsored Walk and Collection in October**.

## Community Partners and Supporters

We have worked hard over the years to nurture strong links with our community, and support from the business community has continued to be strong, although we are still feeling the impact of COVID and the cost-of-living crisis on donations, and many businesses, including supermarkets, have withdrawn their usual charity community schemes which have been of benefit to us in previous years.

A big thank you to our fabulous charity partners for 2024-25, including **The Royal Sussex Lodge**, **Warner Goodman Solicitors**, **Percussion Play**, **Man V Fat Havant**, **Zurich**, **David Lloyd**, **Pure Offices**, **Lui Gong**, **NHS Business Support**, and **Glowsure Insurance**, who have all gone above and beyond to provide friendship and support. Thank you to **Vans Without Borders** and to various **Down Syndrome Organisations** in Ukraine for our continued valued partnership.

## Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association

Thank you to **Portchester Pétanque** and **Hayling Legends** who have once again generously held fundraisers in aid of our charity, **Cllr Chris Atwell** for his ongoing support, and to **Next**, **The Royal Navy**, **Sporting Bears**, **Grubb and Goove**, **B&Q**, **Dominus Dei Lodge**, the **Asda Foundation**, **Jazz Apple** and **TK Maxx** for their donations.



A big thank you to **Garfield Weston** for their generous grant towards core costs.

Local businesses have continued to offer the charity their expertise and support pro bono for which we are very grateful, including our web designers **Design Image** who provide invaluable support in all areas, Jon and the team at **Progression Signage** who have donated free PR materials to us for many years and did a fabulous job with our new centre signage, the **Taylor family** who donate a

window cleaning service, and the **Free Kicks Foundation** who offer our members exciting football club mascot experiences, and the **Disabled Sailors Association** for providing incredible sailing opportunities.

Thank you to our local supermarkets, including **Asda Havant**, **Asda Waterlooville**, **Tesco North Harbour**, **Havant and Fareham**, and to **Gunwharf Quays**, **Whitely and Victorious Festival** for their ongoing support, and **UK Garrison** and **Hampshire Cosplay** for bringing an added level of excitement to our collections.

Our parents and families remain supportive. Many took part in the Great South Run or encouraged friends and colleagues to do so. Some also held fundraising events on behalf of the charity, have taken part in sponsored challenges to raise funds or approached their employers to support us.

Thank you to our **Brighton and London Marathan** Runners, **Jamie**, **Joey**, **Josh** and **Marc**, and to **Stoneham AFC U14** and **Portsmouth RFC Vets**, for helping to raise awareness by adding our charity logo to their kits.

A big thank you to all our donors, fundraisers and volunteers for your invaluable support.



# Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association

## Improving Representation in the Media

The charity actively promotes inclusion and equality, and we believe that it is essential for individuals with Down syndrome and learning disabilities to be offered equal opportunities to

be fairly represented & included in the media world. We have continued our work with **BAFTA** on their diversity board to advise about inclusion in the TV and film industry. We were proud to have co-commissioned a review into inclusion policy, culminating in **inclusion and diversity guidelines** which were disseminated throughout the industry, leading to visibly improved opportunities and better representation for people with DS and other disabled talent.

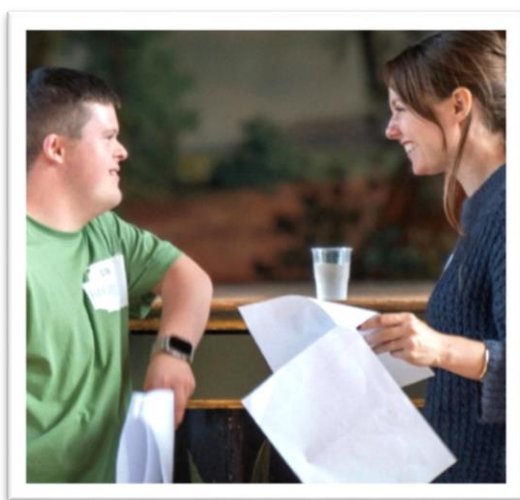
Over recent years we worked with our contacts to ensure the refurbished **BAFTA** building was fully accessible for all. The report promotes a more inclusive media community, with increased opportunities for individuals with LD; an exciting prospect, and we are proud to have encouraged and contributed to this.

Already as a direct result of our work and recommendations, the first actor with Down syndrome, **Tommy Jessop**, was invited onto the BAFTA elevate programme, and is the first voting member of BAFTA and also the first to present an award at the BAFTAs. We were delighted when Tommy was selected for the programme, and his first meeting was with none other than Martin Scorsese! We look forward to seeing much more of Tommy on our screens.

Hot on his heels, we were delighted to see TV Presenter **George Webster** win his well-deserved BAFTA – the first actor with Down syndrome to receive the award.

Our successful partnership with the producers of the multi-award-winning film, **My Feral Heart** created a wonderful opportunity to raise awareness, especially when our leading actor Steven Brandon (who some of you would have met at our special charity screening a few years ago) beat fellow nominees including Michael Fassbender, Eddie Redmayne, Ewan McGregor and Daniel Radcliffe amongst others, to win Best Actor in the **National Film Awards**.

Following on from this, we have joined forces with **SweetDoh Productions** to produce a short film, **Innocence**, which offers leading roles to actors with Down syndrome and LD and is currently being submitted to film festivals. To date the film has won **The London Lift Off Film Festival Award**, and awards at the **International Lift Off Film Awards**, along with the **Don**



**Quixote Award at the Krakow Film Festival**. As a result, we are currently producing a featurelength script for the film, which we hope will be turned into a feature-length film, providing further opportunities for individuals with DS to have leading roles in film.

## Stage 21 Acting Masterclass

**Stage 21**, a distinguished national acting masterclass, was established by our partners at **Sweetdoh** Productions in collaboration with **Portsmouth DSA** and funded by the **Arts Council**. Over the past three years, this initiative



# Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association

has provided valuable training and experience, with recent workshops conducted in Manchester, London and at Portsmouth's prestigious **Kings Theatre**, which generously donated its facilities for three days. Specifically designed for young adults with Down syndrome, Stage 21 offers a unique opportunity to train with seasoned professionals from the acting industry. We are pleased that two of our programme's alumni have earned BAFTA awards for their work.

## Public Relations and Publicity

### Public Relations & Raising Awareness

Effective PR is vital, not only to raise awareness of Down syndrome and our charity's work and drive essential fundraising, but also to help families access support. We continue to work hard to raise awareness in the local area and also on a national platform through our work with the **National Down Syndrome Policy Group**.

We've built strong relationships with parents, schools, and local organisations, creating an ever-expanding network of support. Our events and services have been featured in local papers, and our trustees, staff, and families have participated in a range of local and national media interviews. We're grateful to all who help share our message.

We have been proud to contribute to Hampshire County Council's **HIAS SEND Publication**. Rachael's article, '**Key Strategies for Successful Inclusion**', was circulated to all schools in the county, and another piece was published in **The Times Educational Supplement**, reaching a national audience.

Our social media platforms: Facebook (18.5K followers), Twitter (2.6K), Instagram (1.7K), and LinkedIn (576), continue to grow, helping us engage with families and supporters. We enjoyed our first '**viral**' post on Facebook last year, which featured member **Alfie** as the **Portsmouth Football Club Mascot** courtesy of the **Free Kicks Foundation**, which gained an extraordinary 28K likes and nearly 500 shares.

**Our private Members' Facebook Group** remains a valued space for families to share updates and celebrate achievements on our monthly '**Proud Parent Moment**' day. A strong social media presence is essential to our community engagement and fundraising success, and we encourage all members to support and share our pages for their overall benefit.

Our website, developed by **Design Image Ltd**, remains a key information hub for families and the public. We plan a much-needed refresh in the year ahead.

### Policy & Advocacy

We remain committed to highlighting key issues impacting people with Down syndrome and their families on issues such as education, healthcare, service access, new legislation, and more, through regular contact with councillors, MPs, and other stakeholders and through lobbying parliament when appropriate.

## Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association

Such lobbying has previously influenced change at a national level, including the updating of Blue Badge eligibility criteria and the inclusion of Down syndrome in the annual school census for the first time this year following approval of our report by the Star Chamber. Local councillors receive regular updates and many actively support our events, even joining us for Awareness Week or the Great South Run.

We've represented the community at think tanks, in Parliament, and at 10 Downing Street, sharing the importance of our work directly with MPs, ministers, and civil servants. There is still much to do to secure fair access to services and opportunities, and **we encourage all families to stay engaged, speak up, and support our awareness campaigns. Working together, our voice is amplified and we achieve better outcomes for our community.**

### Driving Change at a National (and International) Level

#### The National Down Syndrome Policy Group (NDSPG)

In 2021, we were delighted to join forces with other key charity leaders to establish the **National Down Syndrome Policy Group**. Our Charity Chair and Vice-Chair, Ken and Rachael, are two of the 15 founding officers including officers with Down syndrome, who work towards supporting people with Down syndrome to have a say in the formation of policy in matters that impact their lives. As Trustees for the NDSPG, Rachael and Ken have the collective responsibility for parliamentary and All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPGDS) liaison, and the NDSPG provide the official secretariat to the APPGDS.

The group has been supported by leading national organisations such as Mencap, as well as over 125 Down Syndrome organisations.

We believe it is very important that people with Down syndrome are at the heart of any policies about people with Down syndrome, and a strong group of over 120 adults with Down syndrome are members of the **National Down Syndrome Advisory Group** who meet regularly and feed into our work.

The NDSPG includes officers, ambassadors, patrons and advocates with Down syndrome, and we are very proud that a number of our teenagers have played an active role.

#### The Down Syndrome Act 2022

The first undertaking of the **National Down Syndrome Policy Group** (NDSPG) was to lobby for a **Down Syndrome Act** to improve opportunities, services and outcomes for people with Down syndrome. They were delighted when Dr Liam Fox MP sponsored the Down Syndrome Bill. Rachael and Ken played a key role by drafting the Down Syndrome Bill, and working closely with Liam, ministers, civil servants and ambassadors with Down syndrome at Parliament to ensure its successful passage through parliament. After a huge campaign which was well supported by PDSA members and the wider community, including rallies outside Parliament, the Bill finally completed its journey to become a historic **Down Syndrome Act**, and England is the first country in the world to have passed such legislation.

It was thought that a Down Syndrome Act was an impossible feat, but we are very proud to have championed this, and it demonstrates what can be achieved when our community works

## Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association

as one. We now continue to work with the NDSPG, parliament and our community to help influence the creation of the **Down Syndrome Act Guidance**, the first draft guidelines being expected later this year after significant delay in the areas of:



- **Community and wellbeing**
- **Education**
- **Employment**
- **Healthcare and Research**
- **Maternity Care**

When the Call for Evidence was launched, we organised three large-scale consultation events in **Westminster** and **Leeds** for individuals with Down syndrome and their families, as well as virtual meetings for group leaders and professionals. These in-person sessions were attended by parliamentary civil servants who listened to views on education, healthcare, social care, and employment. We were especially proud to have **teenagers from Portsmouth DSA** and our **patron, Tommy Jessop**, join us to represent the community.



To further support the development of the Down Syndrome Act Guidance, we previously arranged a **special round table at 10 Downing Street**. There, our ambassadors with Down syndrome met with the Under Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to share their lived experiences and discuss the challenges they face daily. It was a highly successful and empowering meeting, and our ambassadors were an absolute credit to our community. These important conversations have since opened the door for ongoing dialogue and progress.

## Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association

While there is still work to be done, the significance of the Down Syndrome Act and



**accompanying Guidance cannot be overstated.** The initiative has attracted international attention. The former **U.S. Ambassador** hosted a celebratory reception for our organisation at **Winfield House** and requested regular updates. Additionally, Trustees Ken and Rachael were deeply honoured to receive an invitation from the **Ethiopian Ambassador** to collaborate on developing similar legislation aimed at improving outcomes for people with Down syndrome, **not just in Ethiopia, but across the whole of the 54 African nations.**

### Downing Street Hosts Portsmouth DSA and the NDSPG

Members of **Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association** experienced a memorable pre-election highlight with an invitation to visit No.10 Downing Street. In a special gathering, ten young representatives from the charity were warmly welcomed by Mrs. Murty, the wife of the former Prime Minister Rishi Sunak.

Mrs Murty accompanied the group on an exclusive tour of Downing Street, followed by lunch.

Charity Ambassador **Max Ross** said, ***"Mrs Murty was very kind and put us all at ease. She told us to call her 'Ash' and she shared personal stories about herself, including her favourite colour is pink, and that she and her daughters love Taylor Swift's music. Then she asked us to tell her all about ourselves."***

Ken and Rachael with the **National Down Syndrome Policy Group** also helped organise a large reception the previous day at Downing Street for over 150 individuals with Down syndrome from across the UK to celebrate the enactment of the Down Syndrome Act 2022 and to raise awareness about the condition. Guests included actor **Tommy Jessop** (Line of Duty) and CBBC Presenter **George Webster**. It is thought to have been the largest gathering of people with Down syndrome in the building's history.



## Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association

Three individuals with Down syndrome, including Portsmouth DSA Ambassador **Max** were interviewed by **Downing Street Press** and took part in an iconic photo shoot to mark this landmark occasion. The articles were then prominently featured on both the former **Prime Minister Rishi Sunak** and **Mrs Murty's social media pages**.



Reflecting on the week's events Rachael said, ***"We were honoured to be invited to No10 once again. We were able to speak with ministers and key policy makers about the daily challenges people with Down syndrome and their families face. The week was a huge success, and we certainly achieved our aim to raise awareness about Down syndrome at the highest national level."***

### ICB Symposium

The **Down Syndrome Act 2022** established a unique position within the Integrated Care Board (ICB), specifically dedicated to Down syndrome. This role is intended to provide more tailored and efficient healthcare services for individuals with Down syndrome, enhancing coordination in addressing their specific needs. The focused approach aims to improve the quality of care, health outcomes, and the responsiveness of support services to better meet individual requirements.

Previously Rachael and Ken with the National Down Syndrome Policy Group, organised a national ICB symposium for Down Syndrome leads, hosted in the **Department of Health and Social Care**, London to examine the new role, highlight existing good practice and encourage networking. Amongst others, we were delighted to feature Portsmouth DSA's patron **professor Sue Buckley** and welcomed speeches from the former **Minister Maria Caulfield** and the **Secretary of State, Victoria Atkins**.

Over half of England's ICBs were represented, and we received excellent feedback from delegates with multiple requests for a follow-up symposium which we hope will take place in the near future.



# Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association

## School Census Success!

Portsmouth DSA has actively lobbied over past years for the inclusion of Down syndrome as a separate category in the **annual school census** alongside other conditions such as autism and hearing impairment. Working with the National Down Syndrome Policy Group, and supported by the majority of DS organisations, we garnered the support of the Education Secretary, and Ken and Rachael presented the case to the Star Chamber for approval. We were delighted when they consented to our request, and from January 2025, Down syndrome will be included in the school census, meaning that for the very first time in the future, the number of pupils with Down syndrome in schools and the location of these pupils will be known. We will no longer need to estimate these figures.

Amongst other benefits, this could enable local authorities to plan and evaluate for more targeted specialist provision, facilitate the effective dissemination of Down syndrome specific education guidelines, interventions, and resources, and help predict and inform future staff and training needs regionally and nationally. It will help identify trends. We will be able to seamlessly monitor the transition to and from mainstream or special settings, compare mainstream inclusion figures in different regions, and identify regions that rely too heavily on an 'automatic' special school pathway. Figures can be used to support research, tribunals and to argue for more specialist support and training. It will most certainly lead to increased accountability.

**Update: Following our communication with the Department for Education identifying serious inaccuracies in the Down syndrome data collected during the January 2025 School Census, the Department has decided to withdraw this data for the current year.**

**They acknowledged the concerns we raised, noting that there have been teething issues with this year's data collection. As a result, the data does not meet their usual high standards of accuracy and reliability.**

**The Department explained that with the introduction of any new data items, a period of adjustment is often needed before submissions stabilise and reach the expected levels of consistency. They have assured us that steps will be taken over the summer to improve the process and outcomes, and they welcomed our continued input.**

**We have expressed our appreciation for their transparency and collaboration, and we all hope that next year's data collection will reflect greater accuracy and reliability.**

Meaningful data is fundamentally important and has the great potential to improve experiences and outcomes, but as with all information, its true value lies in its effective utilization. **As a community, we all now have a collective responsibility to ensure this new data is used to our advantage.**

## The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Down Syndrome (APPGDS)

The **National Down Syndrome Policy Group (NDSPG)** serves as the secretariat for the **All-Party Parliamentary Group on Down Syndrome** and played a pivotal role in its re-establishment after a 12-year hiatus.

# Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association

Portsmouth DSA Chair and Vice-Chair, Rachael and Ken, represent NDSPG within the Parliamentary space and the APPGDS, playing a vital role in its activities and advocacy.

Now co-chaired by **Damian Hinds MP** and **Andrew Cooper MP**, the APPGDS works to influence government policy with the aim of improving the lives of people with Down syndrome. It also seeks to raise awareness of the challenges faced by people with Down syndrome and highlight opportunities for enhancing life outcomes.

The group's support has been instrumental in shaping, advancing, and implementing relevant policies. We were particularly pleased when APPGDS members unanimously supported the Down Syndrome Bill throughout its parliamentary journey to enactment. Their continued backing has also been crucial in progressing the Down Syndrome Guidance and in strengthening our successful campaign to include Down syndrome as a distinct category in the national annual school census.

**We are very grateful to Portsmouth DSA and NDSPG members for supporting our work, lobbying their MPs and keeping their MPs updated with our progress.**

## Finances

Our annual accounts are prepared by **James Todd & Co.** (formerly Leonard Gold Accountants). We extend our thanks to them for their continued support, and to our new bookkeeper, **Tracy Dukes**, for her invaluable work.

The trustees remain committed to securing the estimated funding required to operate services at least six months in advance. We are now building on these reserves in preparation for the year ahead.

Over the past year, we have seen a continued rise in both membership and service usage. However, it remains increasingly clear that families living further afield are less active and engaged due to geographic distance. Overall engagement levels among general members have yet to return to pre-COVID levels.

As a charity with a very small staff team and largely managed by volunteers, we remind families that our membership criteria promote collective member responsibility with an expectation of active participation and support wherever possible. Without this vital involvement and support, we cannot guarantee the continuation of future services for all.

Membership remains strong with very few families leaving, and demand for our services continues to grow. Coupled with a significant rise in operational costs and demand on resources, we anticipate that both numbers and associated expenses will continue to increase steadily.

Trustees are fully aware of the significant financial pressures brought about by the ongoing cost-of-living crisis. **The long-term sustainability of the charity depends entirely on continued and successful fundraising, which remains a top priority, as well as member support.**

## Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association

In response to rising costs, some of our contracted practitioners have been compelled to increase their fees by 20% to include VAT, with a further increase in fees this year, and we are facing substantial increases in operational expenses.

At the same time, securing grant funding has become increasingly challenging, as many funders are reverting to stricter eligibility criteria and focusing on more specialised or niche areas. This shift further underscores the importance of diversifying our income streams and strengthening our fundraising efforts to ensure the charity's continued viability.

We support families from the point of diagnosis through to the end of schooling and further education. The estimated cost of delivering only our core services, including baby support groups, early development and communication groups, and our nursery/school advisory service, is around **£26,000 basic per child**, and this does not include additional assessments, reports, parental and professional training, a troubleshooting helpline, bespoke school training (including SRE), resources, social events and activities.

With **132 families** and **over 500 individual members**, our mission is to support every child and family from the earliest stages and throughout childhood. Additionally, we continue to provide support and guidance to non-member families, local schools, organisations, and the broader community.

**To meet these growing demands and responsibilities, it is vital that we continue to strengthen our financial reserves.** Our goal is to once again build and maintain a minimum pre-Covid reserve equivalent to one year's running costs (up from 6 months) to further safeguard the future of our services and ensure long-term sustainability.

### The Year Ahead

**Fundraising remains a critical priority** to ensure the continuation and development of our work. **We warmly invite the entire Portsmouth DSA community to actively support these essential efforts**, helping to secure the charity's future and ensuring that all members can continue to access the services and activities they have come to rely on.

We are now well settled into our new centre. Signage is in place, and many of the key rooms have been furnished. Looking ahead, **our focus will be on completing the furnishing** of the remaining rooms and, where possible, **replacing some of the older furniture** and chairs, many of which were inherited from our previous centre and are now tired.

Our team is very small. Ideally, we need to **recruit at least two to three additional staff members** to manage growing administrative demands, to help with fundraising and to support the expansion of our services, particularly in schools. However, this will only be feasible if funding becomes available.

**In the coming year, we remain committed to deepening our partnerships with families, local communities, organisations, and government bodies.** Our goal is to continue delivering a wide range of specialist services while also influencing national policy to improve opportunities and life outcomes for people with Down syndrome. We aim to equip them with

## Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association

the skills they need to become valued and active members of their communities, while providing support and friendship along the journey.

A key area we hope to develop is **dedicated support and opportunities for our growing number of post-18 members**. Unfortunately, due to limited staffing and resources, it has been impossible to set time aside for this to date, but it remains a clear priority for the future, as we work toward a more inclusive and lifelong support model.

**Finally, I would like to express my sincere thanks to the Portsmouth DSA Board of Trustees, our dedicated volunteers, the families we serve, and our generous supporters. It is only through your continued commitment that our charity can grow, thrive, and make a lasting difference.**

This report was approved by the Board of Trustees 03 / 09 / 2025

Signed by order of the Board of Trustees



**Rachael Ross MBE**

**Chair, Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association's Board of Trustees**

# Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association

## Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees on the Unaudited Financial Statements of Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025 set out on pages thirty five to forty.

### Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under Section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act)) and that an independent examination is required.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under Section 145 of the 2011 Act
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under Section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act); and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

### Basis of the independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statements below.

### Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements
  - to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
  - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act

have not been met; or

- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Mrs J Watts FCCA, ACA  
James Todd and Co.  
Furzehall Farm  
110 Wickham Road  
Fareham  
Hampshire  
PO16 7JH

Date: 03 / 09 / 2025



# Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association

## Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 March 2025

	<u>Notes</u>	<u>2025</u> <u>Unrestricted</u>	<u>2025</u> <u>Restricted</u>	<u>Total</u> <u>2025</u>	<u>Total</u> <u>2024</u>
<b>Incoming Resources</b>					
Donations and grants	3	272,192	41,404	313,596	249,394
Investment Income		1,632	-	1,632	2,070
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>273,824</b>	<b>41,404</b>	<b>315,228</b>	<b>251,464</b>
<b>Resources Expended</b>					
Raising Funds	4	16,803	-	16,803	7,553
Charitable Activities	5	188,223	39,120	227,343	219,520
Support Costs	6	151,816	11,174	162,990	168,600
<b>Total Expenditure</b>		<b>356,842</b>	<b>50,294</b>	<b>407,136</b>	<b>395,673</b>
<b>Net Income / (Expenditure)</b>		<b>(83,018)</b>	<b>(8,890)</b>	<b>(91,908)</b>	<b>(144,209)</b>
Net movement in funds		(83,108)	(8,890)	(91,908)	(144,209)
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>					
Total funds brought forward		383,831	17,432	401,263	545,472
Total funds carried forward		<b>300,813</b>	<b>8,542</b>	<b>309,355</b>	<b>401,263</b>

# Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association

## Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2025

	<u>Notes</u>	<u>Total 2025</u>	<u>Total 2024</u>
Fixed assets	13	134,876	221,271
<b>Current assets</b>			
Debtors	10	46,981	19,142
Cash at bank and in hand		138,783	161,666
<b>Total current assets</b>		185,764	180,808
<b>Creditors</b>			
Amounts falling due within one year	11	(11,285)	(816)
<b>Net current assets</b>		174,479	179,992
<b>Net assets</b>		309,355	401,263
<b>Funds of the charity</b>			
Unrestricted funds		300,813	383,831
Restricted funds		8,542	17,432
<b>Total charity funds</b>		309,355	401,263

Approved by the trustees on 03 / 09 / 2025 and signed on behalf of all trustees

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mrs R Ross - TRUSTEE

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mr K Ross – TRUSTEE

# Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association

## Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

### 1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

#### Basis of preparation of accounts

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) issued on 16 July 2014 and with the Charities Act 2011.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS102.

#### Donations

Donations and sponsorships are recognised in the accounts when the charity becomes entitled to the resources and the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

#### Government grants

Grant income received under the Government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities as income in the period to which the underlying furloughed staff costs relate.

#### Expenditure

Resources expended are recognised where it is more than likely than not that there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources and the amounts of the obligation can be measured with reasonable certainty.

#### Management and administration costs

Only those costs specifically identified as for the administration and management of the charity are included in the accounts as such costs.

#### Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Leasehold improvements	over the term of the existing lease, which ceases in October 2026.
Fixtures and Fittings	straight line over 5 years.

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset and is credited or charged to profit or loss.

### 2. EXPENDITURE IN FURTHERANCE OF THE OBJECTS OF THE CHARITY

All expenses paid in furtherance of the objects of the charity are donations.

### 3. DONATIONS AND OTHER INCOME

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
Donations and other income	240,592	217,156
Grants	<u>73,004</u>	<u>32,238</u>
	<u>313,596</u>	<u>249,394</u>

# Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association

## 4. RAISING FUNDS

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
Great South Run	12,123	7,553
Fundraising expenses	<u>4,680</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>16,803</u>	<u>7,553</u>

## 5. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
School Services	127,189	74,455
Communication Groups	12,444	7,558
Early Development Groups	11,421	14,260
Staff Costs	35,933	81,022
Social Events & Entertainment	26,654	26,262
General Expenses	5,922	9,434
Nursery Outreach Service	<u>7,780</u>	<u>6,529</u>
	<u>227,346</u>	<u>219,520</u>

## 6. SUPPORT COSTS

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
Accountancy	852	828
Bookkeeping	574	415
Cleaning	1,772	1,003
Insurance	2,898	1,664
Bank charges	96	118
IT Costs	1,158	2,164
Service charges	36,885	33,654
Rates	4,541	4,254
Postage	241	287
Stationery & Printing	330	679
General	20	-
Venue Hire	2,249	1,914
Training	24,204	18,970
Legal costs	1,571	780
Repairs & Renewals	(1,664)	15,040
Telephone	868	435
Depreciation	<u>86,395</u>	<u>86,395</u>
	<u>162,990</u>	<u>168,600</u>

## 8. TRUSTEES REMUNERATION

There were no trustees' remuneration or benefits for the year ended 31 March 2025 nor for the year ended 31 March 2024.

# Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association

## 9. STAFF COSTS

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
Wages and Salaries	105,809	96,435
Social Security Costs	2,977	2,756
Pension Costs	1,901	1,861
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total wages Costs	<u>110,687</u>	<u>101,502</u>

No employee earned £60,000 pa or more.

The average number of employees during the year was 5, this consists of two full-time employees and four part-time employees.

## 10. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
Trade debtors	-	300
Prepayments	46,981	18,842
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<u>46,981</u>	<u>19,142</u>

## 11. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
Trade Creditors and Accruals	11,285	816
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<u>11,285</u>	<u>816</u>

## 12. ACCOUNTANCY FEE ANALYSIS

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
Accountancy	275	270
Independent Examination	577	558
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<u>852</u>	<u>828</u>

## 13. TANGIBLE ASSETS

	<b>Leasehold Improvements</b>	<b>Fixtures &amp; Fittings</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>Cost</b>			
Cost brought forward	318,282	16,589	334,871
Additions	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Cost carried forward	318,282	16,589	334,871
<b>Depreciation</b>			
Depreciation brought forward	109,929	3,671	113,600
Depreciation charge	83,074	3,321	86,395
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Depreciation carried forward	193,003	6,992	199,995
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Net book value brought forward	208,353	12,918	221,271
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Net book value carried forward	125,279	9,597	134,876
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>



# Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association

## 14. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	<u>2025</u> <u>Unrestricted</u>	<u>2025</u> <u>Restricted</u>	<u>Total</u> <u>2025</u>	<u>Total</u> <u>2024</u>
Fixed Assets	134,876	-	134,876	221,271
Current Assets	177,222	8,542	185,764	180,808
Current Liabilities	(11,285)	-	(11,285)	(816)
	<u>300,813</u>	<u>8,542</u>	<u>309,355</u>	<u>401,263</u>

<b>MOVEMENT IN FUNDS</b>	<u>At 1.4.24</u>	<u>Incoming</u>	<u>Resources</u>	<u>At 31.3.25</u>
Unrestricted Funds				
General Fund	383,831	273,824	(356,842)	300,813
Restricted Funds				
Miscellaneous Funds	17,432	41,404	(50,294)	8,542
	<u>401,263</u>	<u>315,228</u>	<u>(407,136)</u>	<u>309,355</u>

## 24. OPERATING LEASE COMMITMENTS

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
Within one year	25,000	13,750
Between two and five years	110,750	-
In over five years	179,667	-
	<u>315,417</u>	<u>13,750</u>

**Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association**

Registered Charity No. 1147355

Principal Office: Unit 1, Aspen House, Airport Service Road, Portsmouth, Hampshire, PO3 5RA

James Todd and Co  
Furzehall Farm  
110 Wickham Road  
Fareham  
Hampshire  
PO16 7JH

Dear Sirs

During the course of your independent examination of the financial statements of the Charity for the period ended 31 March 2025, the following representations were made to you by management and trustees.

1. We have fulfilled our responsibilities as trustees under the Charities Act 2011, for preparing financial statements, in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework (FRS102 Charity SORP), that give a true and fair view and for making accurate representations to you for the financial statements which you have prepared on our behalf for the Charity.
2. We confirm that all accounting records have been made available to you for the purpose of your independent examination, in accordance with your terms of engagement, and that all the transactions undertaken by the Charity have been properly reflected and recorded in the accounting records. All other records and related information, including minutes of all management, trustees' and members' meetings have been made available to you. We have given you unrestricted access to persons within the Charity in order to obtain your evidence and have provided any additional information that you have requested for the purposes of your examination.
3. We confirm that significant assumptions used by us in making accounting estimates, including those measured at fair value, are reasonable.
4. We confirm that all known actual or possible litigation and claims whose effects should be considered when preparing the financial statements have been disclosed to you and accounted for and disclosed in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework.
5. We confirm there have been no events since the balance sheet date which require disclosure or which would materially affect the amounts in the financial statements, other than those already disclosed or included in the financial statements.
6. We confirm that we are aware that a related party of the Charity is a person or organisation with either (directly or indirectly) controls, has joint control of, or significantly influences the Charity or vice versa and as a result will include trustees, other key management, close family and other business interests of the previous. We confirm that the related party relationships and transactions set out below are a complete list of such relationships and transactions and that we are not aware of any further related parties or transactions.

<u>Party</u>	<u>Relationship</u>	<u>Nature of transaction</u>
R Ross	Trustee	None
K Ross	Trustee	None
A Osborne	Trustee	None
S Brock	Trustee	None
G Jones	Trustee	None
S Pitfield	Trustee	None

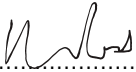
7. We confirm that all related party relationships and transactions have been accounted for and disclosed in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework.
8. We confirm that the Charity has had, at no time during the year, any arrangement transaction or agreement to provide credit facilities (including advances and credits granted by the Charity) for trustees, nor to provide guarantees of any kind on behalf of the trustees.
9. We confirm that the Charity has not contracted for any capital expenditure other than as disclosed in the financial statements.
10. We confirm that we are not aware of any possible or actual instance of non-compliance with those laws and regulations which provide a legal framework within which the Charity conducts its activities and which are central to the Charity's ability to conduct its activities, except as explained to you in the financial statements.
11. We acknowledge our responsibility for the design and implementation of internal controls to prevent and detect fraud. We confirm that

we have disclosed to you the results of our own risk assessment that the financial statements may be misstated as a result of fraud.

12. We confirm that there have been no actual or suspected instances of fraud involving trustees, management or employees who have a significant role in internal control or that could have a material effect on the financial statements. We also confirm that we are not aware of any allegations of fraud by former trustees, employees, regulators or others.
13. We confirm that, having considered our expectations and intentions for the next 12 months and the availability of unrestricted reserves, the Charity is a going concern.
14. We confirm that all grants, donations and other income, including those subject to special terms or conditions or received for restricted purposes, have been notified to you. There have been no breaches of terms or conditions during the period regarding the application of such income.
15. We confirm that we are not aware of any matters of material significance that should be reported to the Charity Commission.

We confirm that the above representations are made on the basis of enquiries of management and staff with relevant knowledge and experience (and, where appropriate of supporting documentation) sufficient to satisfy us that we can properly make each of the above representations to you and that to the best of our knowledge and belief they accurately reflect the representations made to you by the trustees during the course of your audit.

Yours faithfully



.....  
K Ross – Trustee  
Signed on behalf of the Board of Trustees

03 / 09 / 2025

.....  
Date