



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Charity Name

DS ACHIEVE

No (if any)

1176873

Receipts and payments accounts

For the period
from

Period start date

01 / 01 / 2024

To

Period end date

31 / 12 / 2024

CC16a

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Donations	20,096	0	0	20,096	23,264
Event Income	5,610	0	0	5,610	5,401
Hertfordshire Libraries	3,288	0	0	3,288	5,533
The National Lottery Community Fund (RC London and South East Region)	0	9,165	0	9,165	17,891
Grant from BBC Children In Need	0	0	0	0	9,955
Grant from The Baily Thomas Charitable Fund	0	0	0	0	5,000
Grant from Tesco Community Grants	0	0	0	0	1,000
Hertfordshire Community Foundation	0	10,000	0	10,000	0
Shanly Group	0	3,000	0	3,000	0
The Hobson Charity	0	4,699	0	4,699	0
Albert Hunt	0	2,000	0	2,000	0
MCF	0	4,316	0	4,316	0
Postcode Places	0	19,000	0	19,000	0
Interest Received	978	0	0	978	421
Sub total	29,972	52,180	0	82,152	68,465

A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).

	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0
Sub total	0	0	0	0	0

Total receipts **29,972** **52,180** **0** **82,152** **68,465**

A3 Payments

Event costs	1,654	1,304	0	2,958	2,872
Little Achievers Classes	0	18,058	0	18,058	18,230
Young Achievers Sessions	1,618	9,500	0	11,118	11,930
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Sub total	20,821	47,775	0	68,522	71,042

A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)

Office/Other Equipment	74	0	0	74	0
Sub total	74	0	0	74	0

Total payments **20,895** **47,775** **0** **68,596** **71,042**

Net of receipts/(payments)	9,151	4,405	0	13,630	(3,001)
A5 Transfers between funds					
A6 Cash funds last year end	40,447	15,192		55,639	58,640
Cash funds this year end	49,598	19,597	0	69,269	55,639

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

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B1 Cash funds	<table> <tr> <td>Bank Account</td><td>15,699</td><td>19,597</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr> <td>Savings accounts</td><td>33,899</td><td></td><td>0</td></tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Total cash funds</td><td>0</td><td>49,598</td><td>19,597</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))</td><td>OK</td><td>OK</td><td>OK</td></tr> </table>	Bank Account	15,699	19,597	0	Savings accounts	33,899		0					Total cash funds	0	49,598	19,597	0	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))		OK	OK	OK									
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Signed by one or two trustees on t	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval																													



Trustees' Annual Report for the period

From	Period start date			To	Period end date		
	1st	January	2024		31st	December	2024

Section A

Reference and administration details

Charity name

Other names charity is known by

Registered charity number (if any)

Charity's principal address

55 Watford Road
St Albans
Hertfordshire
Postcode <input type="text" value="AL1 2AE"/>

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year
1	Gillian Warwick-Thompson	Chair	
2	Huw Watkins	Treasurer (until September)	
3	Rachel Angus	Trustee	21 March 2024 (resigned)
4	Selena Chapman	Trustee	
5	Vitina Guagenti-Birkin	Trustee	
6	Robert Angus	Treasurer (from September)	21 March 2024 (appointed)
7	Bhavika Bhurtun	Trustee	13 June 2024 (appointed)
8			
9			
10			

Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

Section B Structure, governance and management

Description of the charity's trusts

Type of governing document (eg. trust deed, constitution)	Constitution dated 29.1.2018
How the charity is constituted (eg. trust, association, company)	Charitable Incorporated Organisation
Trustee selection methods (eg. appointed by, elected by)	Appointed by existing Trustee Board

Additional governance issues (Optional information)

The Trustees have considered the risk appetite of the charity. They have adopted a zero-risk tolerance to legal and regulatory risk. Their appetite for risk can be characterised as low reflecting the nature of the charitable organisation and their responsibilities to service users. The Trustees maintain and regularly review their risk register and take actions to reduce or eliminate risk where possible.

Section C Objectives and activities

Summary of the objects of the charity set out in its governing document

The object of the CIO is the relief of children and young people up to age 25, with Down's Syndrome or other additional needs, particularly by providing appropriate support to their parents or guardians, so that such children and young people may achieve their full potential.

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects (include within this section the statutory declaration that trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit)

2024 represented the sixth full year of operational activity for DS Achieve having officially launched to the public on 2nd September 2018 following registration with the Charity Commission on 29th January 2018.

In order to plan and execute suitable activities which meet the charity's objectives, the Trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit. To help us review our progress and plan for our next steps, we held a trustee and employee Away Day in November 2023. We used this as an opportunity to gather views and perspectives from the team to help us look forward to the next steps. We set a new strategy for the period 2024-2026.

We decided to continue to run our **Little Achievers** (0-5 year olds) and **Young Achievers** (5-18 year olds) programmes. These programmes are proving to have a positive impact on the children and young people and are valued by their families. We also continued with our **Resources into Schools** service to ensure that local schools have access to the specialist advice they need to enable them to successfully include children and young people with Down Syndrome in their classrooms. These three programmes are our core, highest priority services.

Our **Resources into Homes** project began at the end of 2023 targeting children in the early years providing practical training for their parent carers on specialist evidence based programmes that support their child's development. We continued the project with a further topic in 2024.

We continued to support the **Volunteering Futures** project with Herts Libraries for young people aged 16-24. We have supported 5 volunteers with Down Syndrome and delivered specialist training to over 300 library staff to ensure inclusive and supportive environments for the young volunteers.

Little Achievers

Little Achievers is a weekly teaching class during term time for children, aged five years and under, with Down Syndrome. It focuses on early skills in the areas of literacy, numeracy, fine motor skills, physical development and communication. The teacher is a highly professional individual who has extensive experience in teaching and working with children and young people with Down Syndrome. Progress is monitored by the class teacher and reported at the end of each term.

The teaching class is accompanied by a wraparound 'Stay and Play' session which includes a number of focused developmental and fun play activities, as well as sing and sign sessions using Makaton. Visiting professionals also join the Stay and Play at regular intervals to offer advice to parents.

Three part time employees deliver the group – a manager and two support workers.

In 2024 we supported 19 families and delivered 55 hours of teaching classes. Feedback continues to be extremely positive with parents particularly valuing the high quality teaching classes and access to professionals. Parents are also appreciative of the supportive nature of the group - from staff and other families.

Young Achievers

Young Achievers is a Social Development programme that is led weekly during term time by an experienced Youth Leader with support from an Assistant Leader, a Support Worker and a team of volunteers. Young Achievers has continued throughout 2024 with 34 different children joining the programme for some or all of the three terms with most of them returning each term.

The children have had a lot of fun while learning new skills to help them develop friendships, join in social activities and to understand the social world a little better. Feedback continues to be positive with parents valuing the structure and content of the sessions as well as the social opportunity provided to their child.

Resources into Schools

This service combines specialist advisory teacher advice to schools with the delivery of a resource to help teachers better support the individual children with Down Syndrome with specific aspects of their learning. During 2024, 23 different children at 20 schools have been supported through this initiative. School staff have hugely valued the opportunity to receive expert advice from the specialist teachers and to learn from them.

Resources into Homes

This new service launched in April 2023, provides direct training from a specialist Down Syndrome advisory teacher to parents on how to use a specialist resource to enable their child to achieve maximum progression with their learning. During 2024, parents of 7 children accessed the service which covered the topic of Number and Memory. Feedback from parents confirmed that they felt they had better understanding and knowledge to support their child as a result of the training.

Other activities

We ran our 'Supporting Pupils with Down Syndrome in Education' training again in the Autumn term, this training continues to have high demand from schools in Hertfordshire and the surrounding counties. Thank you to Helen Long for delivering this course on our behalf.

Twice in 2024, we have had the privilege of delivering a training day on Down Syndrome to over 100 student midwives at City University. Our goal was to educate and empower the next generation of midwives and medical professionals to approach future families with greater knowledge, balanced views, compassion, and positivity. Thank you to parent and Speech and Language Therapist Emma Vaughan for joining us to debunk myths around Down Syndrome, and highlight how using the right language has enormous power, which can make the world of difference to the parents midwives support.

We hosted a free workshop for parent carers on making an EHCP application with 12 attendees, thank you to Tracey Allen for running the workshop and sharing her expertise with our families.

We have provided bespoke 'whole school' training on Down Syndrome for two schools and delivered internal training to our staff and volunteers on effectively using sign language as a communication tool.

We also attended 10 local community events to increase awareness of our services and to provide sign posting and support to attendees.

Additional details of objectives and activities (Optional information)

The Trustees give their time voluntarily to run the charity and to support the delivery of services. In addition, the Trustees gratefully accepted voluntary support from the Board Secretary and other support from volunteers to help with the delivery of services described above.

Section D

Achievements and performance

Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year

The Trustees of DS Achieve are delighted to report a number of key achievements during 2024.

- In January 2024 we held a hugely successful family party with 120 members of our community joining together to celebrate our 5th anniversary as a charity. This proved very popular with attendees, who encouraged us to make this an annual event.
- We have continued to empower parents and professionals through our social media (763 followers of our Facebook page and 238 parents in our closed Facebook group), newsletters (20 newsletters to 288 subscribers) and WhatsApp groups providing information and signposting and providing a platform for peer support. We have also had an average of 784 unique visitors each month to our website. We have seen our following continue to grow and have been delighted to welcome new families to our community.
- Our Little Achievers programme welcomed two new families in 2024, with one of the children with Down Syndrome old enough to join our specialist teaching classes. We were sad to say goodbye to three children who have been with the group for a number of years

and left to start Reception Year at school. We could not be more proud of them!

- Hannah McEwen, our Little Achievers manager left us in September with plans for emigration. We were sad to see her go but wished her well for the future. We were delighted to internally promote Eve Wainwright into the Manager role and welcome Emma Gilby as a new support worker.
- Young Achievers has continued to go from strength to strength and we are grateful to our team of volunteers which continues to grow alongside some volunteers who have been with us from the start. We have been delighted that so many of the children have returned each term and have built some wonderful friendships.
- Our original Young Achievers Group Leader, Avril Prosser, sadly left us in April as she took on a new role with her main employer. We are grateful for all she contributed since the start of the programme. We were delighted to appoint Emma Gilby as her replacement.
- We welcomed the appointment of two new Trustees to the Board with complimentary skills and professional experience. We were grateful to Rachel Angus who stood down as treasurer for her dedication to DS Achieve during her tenure. Rachel joined as a finance volunteer in 2018 when the charity began and then served as treasurer from October 2019. We are very grateful for her significant contribution to the charity.
- We have continued to increase our professional network this year, building links with health and education professionals locally, giving them information about how we can support both them and the families they are working with and so they can signpost new families to us.

The Trustees of DS Achieve are extremely pleased with the achievements during 2024 and the feedback from service users about the positive impact the charity has delivered.

Section E

Financial review

Brief statement of the charity's policy on reserves

DS Achieve aims to hold sufficient unrestricted reserves to ensure that any training courses committed to, alongside any administrative costs of the charity can be met for the following six months at any point in time.

It is expected that both the Little Achievers and Young Achievers programme will be largely funded by grant income and the delivery of the programmes will be dependent on successful grant applications.

At the year end, unrestricted reserves totalled **£49,597** thanks to the generosity of our donors.

Not applicable

Details of any funds materially in deficit

Further financial review details (Optional information)

RECEIPTS

Income has been received via four channels: donations, event income, project income and grants.

Donations

DS Achieve were delighted to be the recipient of a number of generous donations during 2024. Total donations received amounted to £20,096.

Event income

Income was received from attendees to the Little Achievers classes, Young Achievers sessions and training events. All events were subsidised by DS Achieve either through unrestricted reserves or specific grant awards.

Hertfordshire Libraries

Income was received from Hertfordshire Libraries to run the My Voice project.

Grants

DS Achieve successfully applied for six grants during 2024.

Postcode Places Trust - £19,000 towards our core costs.

Masonic Charitable Foundation - £4,316 pa for 3 years towards our core costs.

Shanly - £3,000 towards Young Achievers.

Albert Hunt - £2,000 towards our work with parent carers.

Hertfordshire Community Foundation (£10,000) and the Hobson Charity (£9,398) towards Little Achievers for the academic year 24-25.

All grants that have been awarded are restricted funds, meaning they must be spent in accordance with each of their terms and conditions.

PAYMENTS

The majority of the expenditure of the charity fell into seven areas:

Event costs

These costs relate to our schools' and parent training events including trainer costs, venue hire and expenses, our Young Achievers support worker salary, our family anniversary party and our team awayday.

Little Achievers Classes

Costs for the Little Achievers programme for the Spring, Summer and Autumn terms relate to venue hire, the teacher, visiting therapists, staff costs, salary and resources.

Young Achievers Sessions

Costs were incurred for venue hire, activity providers, refreshments, staff costs, salary and resources.

Resources into Schools

Costs were incurred for specialist advisory teachers and specific educational resources.

Resources into Homes

Costs were incurred for specialist advisory teachers and specific educational resources.

My Voice - Hertfordshire Libraries Project

Costs relate to staff salaries attributable to the project and training provided to Hertfordshire Libraries staff by a specialist advisory teacher.

Administration

Administration costs were met through a combination of restricted and unrestricted funds and were necessary for the effective running of the charity.

Section F

Other optional information

Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Statement

Environmental Sustainability – we are committed to working in a responsible manner to reduce our impact on the environment. We are a remote organisation with our employees either based at home or delivering services via hired premises. This ensures that we only use energy and physical resources in a targeted way for our front line delivery. We aim to be a paperless organisation but where paper based resources are required, we limit the amount we produce and recycle surpluses. When hiring premises, we consider the suitability for our beneficiaries and undertake risk assessments to ensure they are fit for purpose and meet high standards for careful use of resources.

Social Performance - as a charity our purpose is to provide public benefit and performing a social good is our fundamental role. We welcome all families with a child or young person with Down Syndrome in our community and seek to provide an inclusive and welcoming environment. We have a strong focus on equality, diversity and inclusion and strive to ensure our organisation and the services we offer are accessible for all. We have organisational policies to support our ways of working and to ensure that children, young people and vulnerable adults are safeguarded. We offer employment and volunteering opportunities for people with Down Syndrome. We ensure we pay a fair and living wage and ensure that any out of pocket expenses incurred by employees and volunteers are reimbursed. We have an Employee Assistance Programme to help ensure that we look after the wellbeing of our employees.

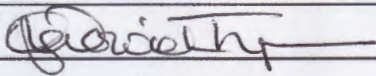
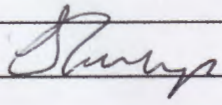
Governance - we use an Independent Examiner to review our accounts, we implement data protection measures, and have an ambitious culture that drives rigorous review, training and improvement of the trustee board. We follow the Charity Governance Code and undertook an audit in 2020 and implemented improvements as a result. We undertake regular self assessments and skills audits of our Board and use the findings to improve our performance. We create strategic plans on a three yearly cycle and use our annual awaydays to help us develop and review our plans incorporating feedback from our stakeholders.

Section G

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)		
Full name(s)	G. WARWICK-THOMPSON	S. CHAPMAN
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	CHAIR	TRUSTEE
Date	16/5/25	16/05/2025



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FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

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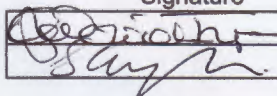
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		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-

Categories	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
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			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

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	Office/Other Equipment	Unrestricted	753	438
			-	-

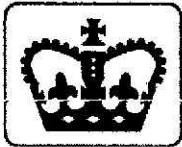
Categories	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities	Payroll taxes	Restricted	902	Jan 25
	Pension costs	Restricted	114	Jan 25
	Payrol services	Unrestricted	92	Jan 25
	Little Achievers Teacher costs - Restricted	Restricted	600	Jan 25
	Young Achievers - Hall Hire	Unrestricted	176	Jan 25
	Little Achievers Therapist Costs	Restricted	300	Jan 25
	RIS Advisory Teacher Visit	Unrestricted	147	Jan 25

Signed by one or two trustees
on behalf of all the trustees

Signature


Print Name
G. WARWICK-THOMPSON
S. CHAPMAN

Date of approval
16.05.25
16.05.25



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

DS Achieve
DSAchieve

**On accounts for the year
ended**

31st December 2024

**Charity no
(if any)**

1176873

Set out on pages

8 - 9

Comments to include the page numbers of additional sheets

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/12/2024.

**Responsibilities and
basis of report**

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

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

**Independent
examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention (other than that disclosed below *) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

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

** Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

Signed:

K. J. Ingrams

Date:

25/09/2025

Name:

Kate Ingrams

**Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):**

ACA (retired)

Address:

89 Oakwood Drive
St Albans
AL4 0UL

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.