

Omagh Area Downs Syndrome Support Group

TRUSTEES' REPORT

for the financial year ended 31 March 2024

The trustees present their Trustees' Report and the unaudited financial statements for the financial year ended 31 March 2024.

The financial statements are prepared in accordance with the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008, FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their financial statements in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

The Trustees' Report contains the information required to be provided in the Trustees' Annual Report under the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) guidelines. The trustees of the company are also charity trustees for the purpose of charity law and under the company's constitution are known as members of the board of trustees.

In this report the trustees of Omagh Area Downs Syndrome Support Group present a summary of its purpose, governance, activities, achievements and finances for the financial year 31 March 2024.

The charity is a registered charity and hence the report and results are presented in a form which complies with the requirements of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 and, although not obliged to comply with the Statement of Recommended Practice for Smaller Entities (the FRSSE) (effective 1 January 2015), the organisation has implemented its recommendations where relevant in these financial statements.

Mission, Objectives and Strategy

Mission Statement

To help reduce stress and anxiety, increase confidence in coping with typical problems, raising expectations and therefore helping people with Downs Syndrome reach their full potential, relieving suffering from medical problems by sharing information.

Objectives

To foster an atmosphere of support among the beneficiaries their family, friends & carers by bringing everyone together. Relieve the needs of beneficiaries by providing services, help, facilities, opportunities for treatment & education to maximise participation in society to enable them to gain employment and lead independent lives. Raise awareness of the effects of Downs syndrome on parents & their families in the Omagh area.

Structure, Governance and Management

Structure

The trustees who served during the year are as follows:

Catherine Masterson
Fiona Fyffe
David Mitchell
Annemarie Grimes
Maighread Goodwin
Marion McCarron
Emma Kerrigan

In accordance with the Constitution, the trustees retire by rotation and, being eligible, offer themselves for re-election.

During the year, our group continues to meet monthly for parents and committee members to organise, plan and review activities. These meetings are minuted. All cheques are signed by two committee members for accountability.

Review of Activities, Achievements and Performance

Help raise awareness about the effects of Downs syndrome on families in the Omagh area. We have welcomed new members to our group which continues to expand year on year. We have provided them with help and education on an informal basis.

During the year we have the following activities and events:

- Talk from two Speech Therapists;
- Rhymes & Songs for two Saturday mornings in June;
- Our annual BBQ and fun day was held at the end of July at Baronscourt Estate;
- Balanceability programme for 6 weeks to learn our young ones to ride bicycles;
- Our annual Christmas lunch for parents/carers and siblings with Santa was held at the The Mellon Country Inn;
- Speech assessments were provided for our children with parents sharing the cost.

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Financial Review

See annual report on income and expenditure. Finances and fund raising continue to be reviewed regularly.

Results and Dividends

At the end of the financial year the charity has assets of £16,251 (2023 - £19,625) and liabilities of £0.00 (2023 - £0.00). The net assets of the charity have decreased by £(3,374).

Reference and Administrative details

We have an elected chairperson, secretary & treasurer with designated roles within the group. We also have a total of seven Trustees of which all assist in the efficient running of the organisation.

Public Benefit Statement

a.Reduced stress and anxiety, increased confidence in coping with typical problems, raising expectations and therefore helping persons with Downs Syndrome reach their full potential, relieving suffering from medical problems by sharing information. Evidence: Minutes of monthly meetings which record experiences of carers , how they value the support from other members and also how they (the carers) have acted on the advice from other carers with positive outcomes. Harm: The possible harm is that a negative attitude can be fostered which can influence a carers expectations and reduce use of a service. This is countered by way of consciously encouraging a problem solving approach. Beneficiaries: persons with Downs Syndrome , their families and carers in the Omagh District Council area. Private benefit: The committee is comprised of parents and carers of persons with Downs Syndrome and therefore committee members benefit from outings and functions organised by the group as entire families are invited to attend. This is an incidental unavoidable benefit as all persons with Downs syndrome must be supervised by a carer on outings.

b.Direct benefit: Improved acceptance of persons with Downs Syndrome in places of work and recreation, reducing discrimination and improving employability and access to services such as schools , clubs etc. Evidence: Anecdotal evidence from carers and employers inform us how newspaper articles provoke positive comments from members of the public. More of our members are attending main stream school than in the past. Harm: By increasing knowledge about learning and physical disabilities that are associated with Downs Syndrome this may be interpreted in a negative way but the aim is to emphasise the positive aspects. Beneficiaries: Persons with Downs Syndrome, members of the public who may come into contact with persons with Downs syndrome in place of work , in the playpark , at school etc. Private benefit: none.

c. Direct benefit: relief of suffering , maximising each individuals potential to live an independent life, improved health outcomes Evidence: Minutes of monthly meetings record carer reports of improved communication, increased physical awareness and activity. Scholarly articles from medical journals support the use of interventions such as aids to improve communication. Harm: There is the potential for harm by injury when increasing physical exercise but the benefits outweigh the risks, there is also the potential to increase stammering when there is increased focus on speech development but the benefits outweigh the risks Beneficiaries:Members with Downs Syndrome Private benefit: As committee members are all carers / parents they and / or their families may incidentally benefit from services provided for the person with Downs Syndrome e.g. ipad apps and games to aid communication. This is incidental and necessary.

d.Direct benefit: An organisation or group whose aims are concordant with Omagh area Downs Syndrome support group may be able to further these aims as a result of financial and moral support from our group e.g. the production of a musical involving persons with a learning disability including Downs Syndrome will improve the social skills of the participants , improve confidence and help to develop communication skills Evidence: Direct involvement of our members and or carers mean that first hand accounts are available to the group of the success or otherwise of the sponsored activity. Also the group requests a report (written or verbal) to qualify how its contribution has been used. Harm:Potential for harm arising from this purpose is that direct control of monies is surrendered and money could be missspent , however by asking for reports and attending the activities , this potential is reduced. Private benefit: The group has not knowingly sponsored any activity for private benefit and is satisfied that any monies donated have been spent in accordance with it.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 30 January 2025 and signed on its behalf by:



David Mitchell
Trustee



Emma Kerrigan
Trustee