



Downright Special Update – February 2024

Welcome to our first update for 2024! In this issue you'll find updates and info on:

- Down Syndrome Awareness Week 2024
- Downright Special Social Events
- Coffee & Chat Sessions
- Dance Survey
- Training
- Downright Special Friday Groups
- Health
- Down Syndrome with Complex Needs
- Preparing for Adulthood – Decision making post-16
- Fundraising

Down Syndrome Awareness Week 18th - 24th March

We are working hard to prepare for the biggest week in our calendar with Awareness Week and World Down syndrome Day on 21st March!

There are lots of ways you can get involved:

- **NEW!!!! Come to our Families Celebration Event** on Saturday 16th March 10-12pm and celebrate with all the other Downright Special families. (See social events below for more info).
- **Cheer on our football players** in the Downright Special First Touch FC charity match on Sunday 24th March 2pm-4pm at Haworth Park, Hull. This Event is Led by Football Coach and Dad to Mia, Karl Southwick. All parents/carers/grandparents/family and friends welcome! Children and young adults welcome to spectate and cheer on, and also join in for a kick about after the match too! Our Just Giving page for this event is already up and running, please share with your friends and family and help us reach our £1000 target <https://www.justgiving.com/page/downright-special-1706116002873> email lisa.bloomer@downrightspecial.co.uk for further information or if you would like to join the Downright Special team and play on the day.
- **Follow, like and share our social media posts** during Awareness week on this year's theme of #EndTheStereotypes.
- **Organise a bake sale or coffee morning** at your home, workplace, school or college.

- **Lots of Socks** – Raise awareness by wearing your lots of socks and posting your pictures on social media using the hashtags #LotsofSocks #WDS2024 Don't forget to tag us in too! You can wear whatever socks you like but official socks can be purchased from <https://www.downs-syndrome.org.uk/product/lots-of-socks-2024/>
- **Create a Facebook Fundraiser:** : www.facebook.com/fund/DownrightSpecialNetwork
- **Download our Fundraising Pack for more ideas** <https://bit.ly/DRSFundraisingPack2024>

If you would like any collection buckets, leaflets, balloons, or posters please email louise@downrightspecial.co.uk or contact 07923 600160.

Downright Special Social Events

Since our last newsletter we have enjoyed a bowling event for all ages. Unfortunately, our sensory story time due to take place on 3rd February had to be rescheduled due to illness. We will let you know a new date as soon as we can. We are looking forward to our Spring Dance Parties with Joanna on Sunday 11th February 😊

We've continued to send out social stories before events and we've been using the events checklist created from the work of our parents' complex needs group but please do give us a call if you'd like to chat about other adjustments that might be helpful for your child or young person.

Events Round-Up

Sunday 11th Feb – Spring Dance Parties with Joanna.

Bookings now closed

Saturday 16th March – Awareness Week Celebration Event for Families

10.00am -12 noon at Bodmin Road Church, Hull

♥ Coffee and cake 🍰🍰☕🥤

♥ Yoga and music with Laura Douse 🧘🧘

♥ crafts

♥ Soft play area open for our little ones

♥ Magic Bag

Wear your #LotsofSocks if you want!

Book Here: <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/downrightspecial/t-gaegrvg>

Bookings close on Friday 8th March at 5pm

Any questions then please email social@downrightspecial.co.uk .

Sunday 24th March 2pm-4pm at Haworth Park, Hull – Charity Football Match

Downright Special Charity Team v First Touch FC Charity Team!

Everyone welcome to spectate and cheer on, and also join in for a kick about after the match too! For more information contact: lisa.bloomer@downrightspecial.co.uk.

Coming soon!

Saturday 20th April – Youth Club Pottery Party (age 11-25)

Saturday 11th May – Monkey Bizness Soft Play (age 0-11)

Saturday 22nd June – Coffee Morning at Priory Baptist Church (all ages)

July TBC – Youth Club Event

July TBC – Densholme Farm Visit

Coffee & Chat

Our coffee and chat sessions are a relaxed morning where parents and carers can get the chance to chat over coffee. Some of our staff members are usually on hand too to help with any issues or questions families may have.

Our next session is on **Thursday 22nd Feb 2024**

9.30am-11.30, Bodmin Road Church

No need to book but it would be helpful if you can let us know if you are coming so we have an idea of numbers.

Babies and under 5s not at school or nursery are also welcome to come along. Just let us know in advance so we can set up a play area with some toys!

Downright Special Training

Our Spring term training programme is now available to book. Although many of these courses are aimed at school staff, parents are very welcome to attend these too.

All courses and information sessions can be booked here: www.ticketsource.co.uk/downrightspecial

Downright Special Education Training	
Wed 28 Feb 2024, 3:45PM - 5:45PM	Teaching Maths to pupils with Down Syndrome: Numicon Breaking Barriers and the Maths Mum - Online
Available to book soon	
18/04/24	Supporting Positive Behaviour - Online
16/05/24	Promoting Social, Emotional and Mental Health and Wellbeing in Pupils with Down Syndrome - Online
05/06/24	Preparing for Successful Transitions - Online
27/06/24	Introduction to Down Syndrome FS-KS1 - Online
03/07/24	Introduction to Down Syndrome KS2-KS4 - Online
Training for Parents/Carers	
Mon 22 Apr 2024 10.00AM-12.00PM	Introduction to Signing – Bodmin Rd Church
Mon 20 May 2024 9.30AM-12.30PM	Toilet Training – Bodmin Rd Church

Don't forget we also offer INSET training to nurseries and schools. Check out our website for more information. <https://www.downrightspecial.co.uk/inset>

Downright Special Fridays

Dates for next term (morning groups):

February 16th NO GROUPS (Half-term)

February 23rd

March 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd

March 29th, April 6th NO GROUPS (Easter)

Our team put a lot of time and effort into preparing resources, so please email us on office@downrightspecial.co.uk as soon as you can, or give one of us a call/text if you are unable to attend a session. We do ask that you do try your best to attend every session please. Many of the activities within lessons are repeated and built on from one session to the next, so the children will make more progress and probably enjoy the sessions more if they regularly attend.

Health

Down Syndrome Care Pathway

Work is continuing on this year's updates to the Down Syndrome Care Pathway, and we are on track for the new version to be published on World Down Syndrome Day. The updates include: Health Visiting, Portage and SaPTs/iPASS. You will find the care pathway here:

<https://www.hullccg.nhs.uk/downsyndrome/hull/>.

If anyone would like to share their experiences of any of these services, please get in touch by emailing sam@downrightspecial.co.uk or chatting to her on a Friday in person or phone.

Once this update is completed, Sam will be back to having more time available to support families on a 1:1 basis with any health and wellbeing issues.

Preparing for Adulthood

Supported Living

One of the themes that parents in our Preparing for Adulthood working group were interested in was understanding options for living independently or semi-independently. DSUK have launched a new private Facebook group called "**DSUK Supported living parents of adults with Down syndrome**". This is a group for parents of young people and adults with Down syndrome to share info, ask advice and hopefully navigate the minefield that is shared living! You can find it here:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/362959180007962>

Preparing for Adulthood Event

Thursday 11th April 2024 11am-6.30pm, Ground Floor Princes Quay Hull.

For SEND young people from year 9 and above. A chance to meet colleges, training providers, voluntary groups, agencies supporting transition etc.

Lending Library

We have a huge range of books and resources that you can borrow from us.

Our entire catalogue can be viewed online. You can browse for books and resources and then request/reserve the ones you'd like to borrow. Books can be borrowed for up to four weeks.

Email louise@downrightspecial.co.uk to request library login details or to request a pdf version of the catalogue.

Easy ways to support Downright Special

Movement for Good - Nominate Downright Special for a £1000 award.

To nominate Downright Special please complete the short nomination form below:

<https://movementforgood.com/#nominateACharity>

Our Charity Number is: 1175863

Charity Type: Disability

The second draw is on 18th March. Please nominate early and Downright Special will be automatically included in all six. You can only vote once this year. Please share with family and friends. Thank you!.

Sign up to Easy Fundraising

Easy Fundraising is an online shopping directory which features major online stores, including eBay and Amazon. Visit www.easyfundraising.org.uk whenever you shop online and we'll receive a free donation of up to 15% from every purchase you make and it won't cost you a thing! We've had a few new people sign up to this recently and we are so grateful for the support!

Amazon Wish list

You could purchase items from our **Amazon Wishlist**. This list is regularly updated with items we need such as stationary, specialist books, resources for Fridays or items for events. https://www.amazon.co.uk/hz/wishlist/ls/1PGPTF1B55IEW?ref_=wl_share

Other News

****For East Riding Families****

The weekend and holiday groups currently run by Endorphins are to be taken over by Barnardo's from April 2024.

😊 The good news: Groups now start at age 4/5!!! (used to be age 8 and above)

😞 The bad news: The sessions stop at age 18. With Endorphins they go to age 25.

As a charity we have been in touch with the commissioner to raise concerns about lack of provision for the 18-25 age group. We will keep you updated.

Those of you with children aged primary school to 18, register your interest by emailing dsi@barnardos.org.uk. You can also follow them on Facebook here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/364989234300673>

Suggestions and Ideas

If you wish to chat about anything in this update, have suggestions or ideas for events, training or support you would like, or you'd like to pass on any tips, please do get in touch.