YORK DOWN SYNDROME SUPPORT GROUP
ANNUAL REPORT & FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

Trustees:

Laura Swales

Sara Pay

Adela Felicia Parzanese Guerro

Theresa Ollerenshaw

Barbara Lorraine Kerr

Elizabeth Allen (resigned 24/11/25)

Charity Number: 1193370

Principle Address:

Holly Cottage, Wheldrake Lane, York. YO19 4SQ

The trustees present their report and financial statement for the year ended 31 December 2025.

Objectives and Activities

Aims and Objectives

To create and develop the conditions which will enable our children with Down Syndrome to attain their full potential.

The Objective of YDSSG

We are a parent-led support group based in York in the UK. Our overall aim is to create and develop the conditions which will enable those with Down Syndrome to attain their full potential.

We aim to support all those involved in the lives of people with Down Syndrome including family members and professionals in York and the surrounding area.

What we aim to do:

- offer personal support to new parents or parents with an antenatal diagnosis in whatever form they prefer
- host regular social events where children can come together to chat, play and learn new skills
- provide information and signpost resources that might be helpful to those with Down Syndrome in York and all who support them personally or professionally
- host regular social events for the whole family
- lend useful resources to families and professionals
- provide training for parents and professionals
- provide speech and language support
- promote the awareness of Down Syndrome and encourage the inclusion of all within society
- support high-quality research about any aspect of living with Down Syndrome

The trustees always ensure that the activities we undertake are in line with our charitable objects and aims.

Affiliations to National charities

Our group is affiliated with two national Charities:

- The Down's Syndrome Association (Registered Charity no 1061474)
- Phab (Registered Charity no 283931)

Both charities support the group's activities, both behind the scenes and relating to activities and training. They provide us with access to services such as DBS checks, funding advice, specialist training and adventure/holiday opportunities for members.

How we work

The Charity delivers its charitable aims with four focus areas:

- Education
- Social and Sports
- Fundraising
- Communication

Funds raised support educational and information provision, resources and subsidise social events. Monthly committee meetings include reviews and ongoing activity planning.

Public Benefit

The trustees confirm they have had due regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance.

The CIO advances the wellbeing and inclusion of people with Down's syndrome and supports their families in York

by providing information, peer support, advocacy, training and inclusive activities. Services are free or subsidised and open without unjustifiable restriction.

Benefits include reduced isolation, increased confidence and improved access to services for families, and better awareness among local professionals and communities. We monitor attendance and feedback to evidence impact and to improve what we do.

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the requirements of Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

Achievements and Performance

Education:

Speech and language, and communication support.

Following advice from the specialist Speech and language therapist engaged to run the Chatterbox groups, the decision was made to pause the "Chatterbox" groups provided to primary school age children. The needs of the children receiving therapy had become more varied and we were advised that a group therapy approach was not sufficiently meeting need. The committee decided to review the overall approach to delivering speech and language therapy support and undertook a review of the speech and language needs via an online questionnaire. The outcome of the needs assessment clarified the wide range of needs of family members as well as their wide-ranging age profile (from preschool to mid-30s). Discussions took place with specialist speech and language therapists about how we might best support such differing needs. At the end of the year plans were being put into place to offer individual specialist speech and language assessments for family members.

Educational training

YDSSG's training team (Laura Swales and Jo Bryenton) continued to deliver two "fixed" sessions to teaching staff and any parents who wish to attend one on July and a repeat in October. They continue to offer bespoke sessions in individual settings.

We continue to cover the learning profile of a child with Down Syndrome (DS) and how to teach and support a child with DS. We have also been able to tailor the sessions around the specific needs of the individual child and deliver sessions on a day/time to suit the school. We continue to support professionals and parents where possible by responding to emails and sharing relevant resources and courses.

Social and sporting activities:

Regular Events

DS Yorkies Football team

The team have continue regular Monday evening football sessions at Burnholme sports centre during term time. The group includes children and young people aged approximately 10 and above. Siblings also attend and are an important part of the group. We were delighted to welcome our new volunteer coaches, Alex and Stuart, to the group in 2024. They have really thrown themselves into the club and we're very grateful for the time that they commit to the group. We launched a junior team for younger members of the group in June. Grateful thanks also go to Rachael Harrison who continued to co-ordinate the group.

Sing and Sign Maestros

Our Sing and Sign Maestros (S&SM) group for people aged 14 plus has continued to thrive with the leadership of Jo Bryenton who also provides all Makaton support. We were sad to say goodbye to Ben Whittaker, the musical director of the choir during the Summer as he moved away from the area but were delighted to welcome a new musical director (Rachael MacKenzie) along with her daughter. Notable activities for S&SM in 2025 included a return to headlining the "This is Me" festival in Ripon, a trip to Whitby for an impromptu busking session during the summer and fish and chip outings to Thompsons. The group launched a "junior Sing and Sign Maestros" for younger children during the year however take up was disappointing and attendance

wasn't sufficient to justify continuing.

History and Archaeology Club – Dig It!
Our post 16 History and archaeology club continued to meet once a month for most months throughout 2025. Meetings took place in Wigginton, and the focus was exploring the surrounding area of Wigginton and its background. The group built a model imagining medieval Wigginton. Thanks to Sue Clayton for supporting the creative crafting activities and to Jon Kenny, a community archaeologist who provides the professional/archaeological facilitation for the group.

Saturday Club
This group for the families of pre-school and primary aged children was re-launched in early 2025, using a room in Osbaldwick Nursery. Meeting on the morning of the third Saturday of the month its format was that of an informal drop-in and chat with refreshments, games and activities for the children.

Explore club
A new monthly group was launched for older teenagers and young adults. The group facilitates friendships and communication and seeks to foster independence skills. The group members stated their preferences for activities and the group alternates its "exploration" between staying at the Explore library base in Tang Hall and "exploring" places in the local community. The final session of the 2025 proved very popular with a trip to explore a local pub – the Handley Tap in Osbladwick.

Other Summer social activities

Our group benefited from several outings. We enjoyed two boat trips on calm seas during a glorious day in July with WetWheels at Whitby. We also returned to the open-air swimming pool at Helmsley for two group private hire sessions. The group also visited an Alpaca farm, had a day out at York maze and hired a beach hut in Scarborough for a day for families to enjoy.

York Model Engineers trip for families
Another annual event was the trip to the York Model Engineers' club. All who attended very much enjoyed the club's hospitality and riding on different model trains. Many thanks to Lisa Hodgkinson who organised the event and the club for being such generous hosts and showing our group such kindness over many years.

Phab led activities
Our group continues to benefit from its affiliation with the national charity "Phab". Phab organises several adventurous activities during the year which our group members have been able to benefit from joining. These include a flying day, indoor skiing and outdoor adventure holidays.

Christmas Tree festival
This year our group again decorated a tree for the York Minster Christmas Tree festival. We held two workshops to make decorations during the months leading up to the festival led by Sue Clayton. The tree was on display throughout December, and we were delighted with the positive comments that we received.

Inclusive Minster Carol Concert
Our group, led by our Sing and Sign Maestros participated in the 2025 inclusive carol service at York Minster again alongside other York based SEND groups.

Fundraising:

York 10K
The group continued its Charity partnership for the York 10K and benefitted from the support of 19 runners and 12 volunteer marshals as they took to the streets of York in early August. We were extremely grateful to all the runners and the race marshals for all their hard work. The fundraising total raised from event sponsorship exceeded £3100.

321 Lottery
The group's monthly "321 Lottery club" continued to provide a steady income for the group. Members pay £24 annually or £2 monthly for a number in the lottery. Prize money comprises 35% of funds raised in the month.

65% of funds are retained by the group to fund its activities. For most of the year we maintained a regular membership who purchased 49 numbers per month.

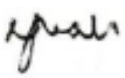
Grant funding
We received funding from the Co-op community fund for our sporting activities and were successful in an application for future funds for Explore and DigIt club activities for 2026. We were invited by the NHS to bid for funds to provide support for new parents, which proved successful.

Information gathering and dissemination:

York Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust have a regular supply of our new-parent information packs on their ante-natal, maternity and children's wards in both York and Scarborough. We have also supplied information to the maternity team at Harrogate Hospital.

A key part of the group's activities is sharing information that might be relevant to our families about national policy developments, local consultations and activities that are organised by other voluntary groups or statutory bodies. Information about the Down Syndrome Act, legislation relating to health and social care, benefits rules, parent carer forum activity, as well as more general information relating to support for families is shared via a closed Facebook group and an email list.

Signed



Laura Swales

Dated

30/10/26

On Behalf of YDSSG Trustees

CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Charity Name	No (if any)
York Down Syndrome Support Group	1193370

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period from	Period start date	To	Period end date
	01/01/2025		31/12/2025

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Donations and lagacies	7,698	2,097	-	9,795	15,955
Charitable activities	1,611	5,000	-	6,611	22,666
Trading activities	1,148	-	-	1,148	1,300
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total *(Gross income for AR)*	10,457	7,097	-	17,554	39,921
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
N/A	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	10,457	7,097	-	17,554	39,921
A3 Payments					
Raising funds	1,168	-	-	1,168	2
Charitable activities	11,520	9,758	-	21,278	13,458
Governance costs	840	-	-	840	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	13,528	9,758	-	23,286	13,460
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
N/A		-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	13,528	9,758	-	23,286	13,460
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 3,071	- 2,661	-	- 5,732	26,461
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end (se	19,397	13,240	-	32,637	
Cash funds this year end	16,326	10,579	-	26,905	26,461

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

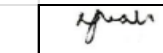
Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Bank accounts	16,326	10,579	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	**16,326**	**10,579**	**-**
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK

	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets	N/A	-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets	N/A		-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Laptop computer	General YDSSG funds	-	-
	Printer	General YDSSG funds	-	-
	Library of books and media resources	General YDSSG funds	-	-
	Small table and chair	General YDSSG funds	-	-
	Assorted Toys and Games	General YDSSG funds	-	-
	Gazebo weights	General YDSSG funds	-	-
	Aprons	General YDSSG funds	-	-
	Branded T shirts	General YDSSG funds	-	-
			-	-

	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities	N/A		-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
		Laura Swales	30/10/2026

Note. We believe a small accounting error led to a different year end balance being declared in the 2024 submission.