

Inclusively Down



Meeting individual learning needs

Exclusives

September 2017

ENABLING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE TO ACCESS AN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

IN THIS ISSUE

How can we help?

Inclusively Down support schools, settings, families and professionals to further develop their knowledge and skills to establish an inclusive learning environment which meets the individual learning needs of children and young people with Down syndrome.

We offer bespoke and personalised support which *really* meets children and young people's individual needs. We believe that every child and young person regardless of ability has a right to an inclusive and outstanding education, which supports their emotional wellbeing and prepares them for independence and living a fulfilled life.

Supporting Schools and Settings

Inclusively Down offer consultation visits and packages and are expert at working directly in schools and settings alongside staff and with pupils, offering advice, support and proactive practical strategies on a wide range of topics including differentiation of the curriculum, the specific learning profile, behaviour, social skills, support and transition.

Supporting Staff Development

Inclusively Down design and deliver an extensive range of training courses, to en-skill professionals, parents and carers to meet the individual learning needs of children and young people with Down syndrome. These can be bespoke, to meet individual requirements, or we run national events throughout the year, details of which

can be found on our website

www.inclusivelydown.co.uk

Supporting Families

Inclusively Down believe parents and families are paramount to the progress and successful inclusion of children and young people with Down syndrome. Parents are the first teachers and know their children best. It is crucial that schools, settings and professionals work in partnership with parents. Inclusively Down actively supports this through working directly with parents and agencies to ensure the best outcomes for their children.

Shared Founding Ethos of Inclusively Down

The professional experience of Inclusively Down's founders led them to create the company with the shared ethos being:

- All children have a right to an inclusive and outstanding education.
- It is the right of all children to access an education through which they can be happy and achieve.
- Children should be valued for who they are and the individual contribution they can make.
- Having a pro-active not reactive approach to meeting individual needs
- Raising achievement of children with Down syndrome through high expectations.



Autumn Term 2017

Welcome back to the new school year. We hope you have had a relaxing summer break and managed to find some sunshine somewhere!

In this issue we will be looking at:

Who We Are and What We Do

(p1) For those new to us - see this page!

Preparing For The New Academic Year (p2)

Hints and tips for school based staff and parents.

Inclusively Down Recommends

(p2-3) Books, research, good practice, resources

Upcoming training (p3)

Getting Ready ...

The start of the new academic year can be both exciting and nerve wracking for teachers, parents and students alike. As we start the new academic year we thought it would be good to share with you some helpful tips when meeting the learning needs of children and young people with Down syndrome.

Things teachers might consider when setting up their classrooms:

Learning profile:	Things to consider:
Hearing	Seating and noise levels – ensure the student is seated near the front of the classroom to ensure maximum opportunity to see and hear what is being said.
Vision	The size and layout of resources and materials which will be used. 'Big and Bold'. High contrast is always best and this should be remembered when writing on boards or in books
Visual Memory	Prepare any visual resources you will need early on especially when related to supporting routines and structure e.g. visual timetable, now & next board, lining up/dressing/toileting routines etc. Use visual prompts to ensure the student learns any class rules.
Auditory Memory	Plan opportunities for over learning, repetition and consolidation of skills. Information will need to be broken down and supported with visual resources/prompts.
Low Muscle Tone (Hypotonia)	Ensure the furniture is suitable for the height of your student. Feet must be positioned flat on the floor so you might need to find a step or alternative tables/chairs. Having a writing slope can support fine motor skills and positioning. Consider alternatives to written recording the student might be able to use. Ensure any equipment the student may need is accessible
Language Skills	Expressive: How you will assess what the student has learned? Receptive: Negatives can be difficult so ensure written instructions, classroom rules etc. are explicit
Concentration & Attention	When planning groups, your student should be fully included with access to good role models for behaviour, language and learning. They may need shorter tasks and a wider variety of activities/tasks needing to be planned. Think about using a 'busy box' which will have additional educational activities available for them to use independently.

Things parents might consider when preparing their children for the start of the new academic year;

Learning profile:	Things to consider:
Health/Medical	Prepare a care information sheet which can be given to new staff that will be working with your child e.g. When glasses need to be worn, any hearing issues that may affect listening or when staff are working with your child, toilet routines, any feeding issues and possible list of likes and dislikes if appropriate

Visual Memory	As in school, a visual timetable and social stories may be useful especially if your child finds change more challenging. For secondary age students having a copy of their timetable up on a wall may help when supporting greater independence skills.
Structure & Routines	Establishing routines at home especially with homework, self-care and bedtimes. Use of a diary or calendar to support the preparation of transitioning into a new school or class. This will help with the concept of time in a visual way.
Language Skills	Setting up a home school communication book or system. This will ensure information is passed both ways and can act as a starting point to encourage your child to talk about the things they have been doing in school.
Low Muscle Tone (Hypotonia)	Practicing dressing skills particularly with school uniform and P.E kits. If available consider the use of IT so your child becomes familiar with key boards, Apps etc.
Social & Independence Skills	Encourage and practice turn taking and joint attention skills. Encourage and plan for increasing your child's independent skills. Ensure school staff know what your child can do and what they may need help with so expectations are consistent. Have a shared plan which is updated on a regular basis.

This is by no means a definitive list! These hints and tips plus many more will be explored and explained further in our training [Meeting the Learning Needs of Children and Young People with Down Syndrome](#) which we will be delivering on 20th and 28th September 2017 in both Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes.
See p3 for details

Inclusively Down Recommends...

We like to share with you any books, research, good practice or resources that we feel enhance provision for the children and young people you work with. Here's what we think you should look at this term...

Special iApps

www.specialiapps.org |
Facebook/Twitter @specialiapps

Special iApps



www.specialiapps.org

iPads are fast becoming increasingly recognised as a tool to aid teaching and learning in the classroom. Last term Inclusively Down attended the 21 & Co Information Day, Special iApps workshop, at the Langdon Down Centre in Teddington. Colin Dean of Special iApps spoke about the award-winning technology, which we have found first hand can enhance the teaching and learning of children and young people with Down syndrome.

Read on...

Colin and Beverley Dean founded Special iApps in 2011 when they could not find any appropriate apps to support teaching their son, taking in to account his hearing, speech and co-ordination difficulties and wanting to find apps where the background was uncluttered, access was not hindered by poor fine motor skills and which could be easily personalised to aid interest and motivation for use. Special iApps now develop educational apps for children with special educational needs.

There are 6 apps to discover but our favourites are:

Special Words – which can be used to develop reading through the use of the Match, Select and Name method, as well as work on expressive and receptive language, speech, fine-motor skills, and much more. It is an extremely useful tool for teaching new words including topic vocabulary for all ages. It is so intuitive, quick and easy to use and easily personalised to be meaningful to the child you work with.

Lucy has participated in a trial for a new version of Special words, Special Words Pro, together with a new teacher's manual. This is due to be released in the Autumn and adds even more desirable features to this already fab app, including printable word boards and flash cards

and additional ready-made resources linking to National Curriculum content.

Special Stories - can be used to make personalised books using any photos or pictures. These may be for topics, reading, home school communication, social stories, transition and when preparing for change, a record of lesson content such as science experiments to revisit and revise for repetition and overlearning; the possibilities are endless! You can also transfer content between the Special Words app and the Special Stories app, to reinforce learning.

At Inclusively Down we have seen our pupils make good progress with the use of both these apps, when incorporated as part of reading interventions with pupils aged 2-19. When learning to read, the motivation provided by personalised books about themselves or favourite characters or activities they have experienced, adds a whole new dimension and with Special Stories these can be provided so easily. They are now a part of our teaching that we would find it hard to do without and see ourselves using further in the future. It certainly cuts down the preparation time and the use of the laminator!

Training Autumn Term 2017

If this is the first time you have taught or supported a pupil with Down syndrome then you need to book onto one of the training sessions we are running this term...

Meeting the Learning Needs of Children and Young People with Down Syndrome

This course will enable you to teach and support children and young people with Down syndrome more effectively. It will cover the key elements of the specific learning profile, how you can best support progress, dispel some myths and give you strategies and resource ideas, based on research and good practice, to ensure you can meet their individual learning needs. We will also consider the role of the support assistant and what effective inclusion looks like.

DATE: Wednesday 20th September 2017 **VENUE:** Chartridge Lodge, Chartridge Lane, Chesham, Bucks HP5 2TU
TIME: Full day 9.30am-4.30pm

OR

DATE: Thursday 28th September 2017 **VENUE:** The Ridgeway Centre, Featherstone Road, Milton Keynes MK12 5TH
TIME: Half day 9.15am-12.15pm

Place are limited so to ensure a place download, complete and return the appropriate booking form which can be found on our website www.inclusivelydown.co.uk . Or you can contact us **as soon as possible** either by emailing contact@inclusivelydown.co.uk or calling **07785 994071 (Julie)** or **07950 000712 (Lucy)**

DON'T FORGET...

To ensure you receive the latest news and event updates log onto our website www.inclusivelydown.co.uk and subscribe to our mailing list on the 'Contact Us' page.

Also keep checking with our Facebook page
<https://www.facebook.com/Inclusively-Down-16357486066634>



Lucy Clark And Julie Knight