

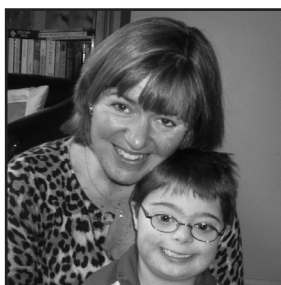


down's syndrome oxford

Newsletter • November 2013

From the chair

Since our last newsletter in July I'm pleased to tell you that we have taken some action on the points raised at our AGM about how to extend our activities and make best use of funds.



Here's a flavour of what we're doing:

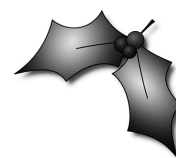
- We are running a course for teenagers called **'Accessing Life'** over three Saturday mornings in early 2014. This is a project funded jointly by DSO and the Coventry Building Society, one of our generous donors. See *page 4* for more.
- We have conducted a **survey** amongst members of training requirements, and now have plans to carry out some training for parents, schools, and other professionals. This is an ongoing project: see *pages 16 & 17* for more about this.
- We are making efforts to expand the geographical reach of the **Early Development Groups** and have done some work across the county to publicise these groups.
- There was a very well attended **all-age outing** to the cinema, followed by a Chinese meal.
- We are funding the purchase of some **corner seats** suitable for young babies, which will be held and loaned out by Rowena Pearce, clinical nurse at the Down's Syndrome Service based at the John Radcliffe Hospital.
- We are creating a 'Welcome to DSO' **new baby pack** which should be ready around Christmas.
- We have invested some money in printing new leaflets, folded cardboard collection boxes, and sheets of stickers. So, if you are **holding an event** to raise money for DSO please contact Marion Simon, Secretary, who holds a supply (her details are on the back cover).
- We are planning a **Ceilidh night** for parents & over 18s in February (see *page 14* for details).

This is all on top of our regular work of planning the Christmas party, arranging activities for the various clubs, meeting with Children's Services to help plan a new pathway for the care of children with Down's Syndrome, local fundraising events, running the Early Development Groups, etc.

It's not possible to thank everybody personally here for all their hard work, but it is a real team effort. Thank you all very much.

Katharine Horrocks

Christmas Party Sunday 8 December



Join us for this year's Christmas Party, which is being held at Exeter Hall, Kidlington on Sunday 8th December from 3-5pm.

As in previous years, we are having a **'Bring and Share'** buffet tea. So please bring sweet and savoury picnic food but note that we do not have use of the ovens, so food needs to be ready to eat, preferably on a disposable plate/container.

Mulled wine, soft drinks and mince pies will be provided. We have **children's entertainer** Simon Says for the duration of the party, as well as a visit from **Father Christmas**. PLEASE REMEMBER – bring a wrapped and CLEARLY LABELLED gift for each of the children in your family group!

Any questions or for **offers of help to set up/clear away**, please contact Netty Lings on netty@lings.me.uk
Looking forward to seeing you there!

Fantastic fundraising!

The Mud Cows after the Wolf Run!



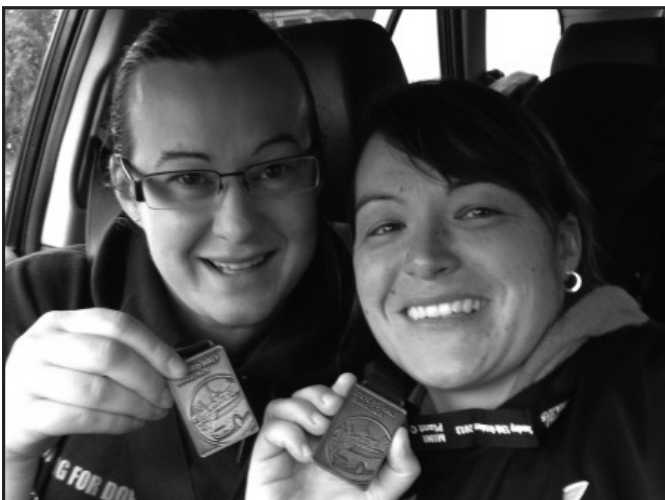
Oxford Half Marathon

Sarah Fonge writes, "9:15 on Sunday 13th October we were putting on bin liners as the heavens opened. Hoping for a glorious sunny day we got an amazingly rainy and windy one."

"This however was not going to stop us, 13.1 miles of the Oxford Half Marathon would get us £800 for DSO so off we went. By mile 3 there wasn't a dry piece of clothing on us but the atmosphere was fabulous. Taking in the scenery of Oxford whilst dodging puddles.

"Seeing the mile 12 marker was a very happy time and crossing the finish line, well you can imagine, was amazing.

"Thank you to everyone who supported and listened to me running up to the event. Next year I'm thinking of maybe a mass cake sale!"



Sarah Fonge (left) shows off her Oxford Half Marathon medal

Mud Cows!

On 6th September, The Mud Cows took on the challenge of the Wolf Run.

Four lovely friends of Lucy Sanderson (mum to Chloe, age 8) Sam, Karen, Sarah and Ariana, aka Daisy, Buttercup, Doris and Betsy, completed the 10km wild off-road run, taking on a number of nature's finest obstacles, from lake swims to mud pits, fallen trees, boggy ground, ditches, hills and dense foliage.

The Mud Cows very kindly chose DSO as their charity and have raised £440. A huge thank you ladies!

Recipe for success

INGREDIENTS

- * Music provided by Silent Running, which Sarah Fonge's dad plays in
- * Amazing raffle prizes donated by various companies
- * Interval line dancing
- * An auction for a signed Oxford United First Team
- * Shirt
- * A lot of enthusiasm

THE RESULT

£1,444.00 for DSO!

An evening of fun attended by over 100 friends and family was the recipe for success. Many thanks to The Marston Royal British Legion, Silent Running and all that attended. A fabulous night for an equally fabulous charity!

Dancemania

Back in June, Dancemania Dance School held a charity dance show at The Marlborough School (Woodstock) in aid of DSO.

DSO's very own Sim Lings and his big sister Aerin attend Dancemania, which is run by Amanda Paton, and starred in her show.

Amanda was thrilled to be able to help a local charity that supports one of her dancers and the show was a huge success. The show raised a phenomenal £591 through ticket sales (£480) and a cake stall (£111).

For more information about Dancemania, visit their website www.dancemania-dance.co.uk Thank you to everyone who supported the show



Sim (left of picture) enjoying the dance show

Bullseye!

Ryan Wells writes: "On 19th October, Colin Royall, Gemma Royall, Darren Bowler and I hosted a Darts Exhibition with pro darts player Terry Jenkins at Berinsfield Social Club to raise money for two selected charities.

"These were picked by Jolene Crawford from Berinsfield and when I heard about her daughter Evie-Mae's illness, I spoke to a few friends and come up with the idea that we should raise some money for charity."

"Jolene picked the two charities that are close to her heart: DSO and Kamrans Ward at the JR. The darts evening was amazing: over 100 people attended and everyone enjoyed it! 600 raffle tickets were sold and the main prize was a £400 TV donated by Temple Cowley Shopping Centre. We are delighted to have raised £700 for DSO and were looking at making this an annual event."



Fundraising resources

We have some new resources which may be useful if you are organising a fundraising event:

- DSO leaflets
- Cardboard donation boxes
- DSO stickers
- A display board
- Pull up DSO banner

Please contact Marion Simon if you need a supply of leaflets, donation boxes or stickers. (Marion's details are on the back cover.)



*Terry Jenkins
with Evie-Mae
Crawford*

DSO Lottery – update

The DSO Lottery was launched a year ago as a new fundraising initiative for the charity.

It's a very easy way to donate money to DSO with the added benefit of a chance to win a cash prize. Numbers are sold for £5 each per month and a draw takes place **on the fourth Wednesday of every month.**

Each month we collect £114 and a percentage of the monies raised are given to DSO each month. Here are details of the lucky winners since the last newsletter:

June

1st prize - £38.00	Rachel & Gary Lane
2nd prize - £22.80	Katharine Horrocks
3rd prize - £15.20	Andrew Partner

July

1st prize - £38.00	Lucy Sanderson
2nd prize - £22.80	Ella Segaran
3rd prize - £15.20	Diana McMahon

August

1st prize - £38.00	Anne Churchill-Stone
2nd prize - £22.80	Sally Dubock
3rd prize - £15.20	Nick Smith



September

1st prize - £38.00	Lucy Sanderson
2nd prize - £22.80	Jenny Dilnot
3rd prize - £15.20	Emily & Matt Robinson

The more numbers we sell each month, the bigger the cash prizes and the more money we raise for DSO!

To take part in the DSO Lottery simply complete a registration form (and standing order mandate if you would like us to arrange your standing order).

Forms are on the next few pages and on the DSO website.

Accessing life: for teens

DSO is organising a workshop and friendship group for young people between 13-18 years of age, over three Saturday mornings in January, February and March next year, with an introductory meeting taking place on 30th November.

The workshops will be run by Vik Ralfs, who for nine years was Training Manager at the DSA and has a particular interest in Sex and Relationship Education.

Vik says: "These workshops will be about relationships and connecting with others. My focus will be about building self-esteem, self-worth and identity. We will look at different types of relationships, what they mean, and how we need to be within them."



"I will explore different life 'stuff' with the group and encourage them to share, in a variety of ways, what they think and feel about what they are encountering as they navigate their way through life."

If you have not already received a letter from Katharine Horrocks inviting your son or daughter to attend the workshops, and your child is within the age group of 13-18, please contact chair@dsoxford.org.uk or phone 01844 261424.

DSO Monthly Fundraising Lottery

You are invited to join the DSO Monthly Fundraising Lottery to raise money for Down's Syndrome Oxford.

Participants purchase a number for £5 each month. This number is included in a monthly draw.

Prize money will be 40% of the net monthly takings. **If** we sell 100 tickets per month you could win:

1st Prize £100

2nd Prize £60

3rd Prize £40

The easiest way to join is to set up an online monthly payment from your bank and email the completed application form to us.

OR you can set up a monthly standing order by completing both forms and posting them to us.

OR pay annually by sending us a cheque for £60 with the completed application form.

See the application form, standing order form and DSO monthly lottery rules on the following pages.

DSO Lottery Administrators:
Lucy Sanderson/Amanda Foulds
Email lottery@dsoxford.org.uk



DSO Monthly Lottery Application Form

Applicant Details:

Name	
Address	
Telephone	
Email	
Date of application	

Numbers:

I would like to participate in the DSO Lottery and agree to purchase (please select as appropriate):

- ☐ 1 Number (£5 per month) ☐ 2 Numbers (£10 per month)
- ☐ 3 Numbers (£15 per month) ☐ Other amount @ £5 each (please specify) £

Method of Payment:

Payment for the DSO Lottery can be made MONTHLY by an ONLINE TRANSFER or STANDING ORDER or ANNUALLY by CHEQUE/CASH. Please tick as appropriate:

☐ **ONLINE TRANSFER**

I will set up an online transfer with my bank on 1st of each month for a payment of £ to the DSO Lottery Account. Please include **your name** as reference. Account number: 29786768 Sort code: 30-80-45

☐ **MONTHLY STANDING ORDER**

I will complete the attached standing order form for £ per month and send it to the address below with this application form.

☐ **CHEQUE/CASH**

I will send a payment of £ (£60 per number annually) to the address below with this application form. Cheques should be made payable to **DSO Lottery Account**.

Payment must be in the DSO Lottery Account by 10th of each month to be entered into that month's draw.

PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED FORMS TO:-

By email: lottery@dsoxford.org.uk

By post: Lucy Sanderson, DSO Monthly Lottery, 203 Avocet Way, Bicester, Oxfordshire, OX26 6YW

Office use only

Number(s) allocated					
Start date					



DSO Monthly Lottery Standing Order Mandate

Please print and fill in the form below return to DSO with your application form.

Customer Details (all unshaded boxes must be completed)

To: The Manager

Your Bank/Building Society Name:	
Your Bank/Building Society Full Address inc. the post code.	

Please set up the following Standing Order and debit my/our account accordingly:

Account Name	
Sort Code	
Account Number	
PAYEE DETAILS	
Name of Person/Organisation	DSO Lottery Account
Bank and Branch Name	Lloyds TSB Bank Headington Branch
Account Number	29786768
Sort Code	30-80-45
Payment reference (please enter your name)	
PAYMENT DETAILS	
Amount of payment (£5.00 per number per month)	£
Frequency of payment	Monthly
Date of payment each month	
When would you like the first payment to be made?	
When would you like the final payment to be made? (We request you sign up to the DSO Monthly Lottery for a minimum of 12 months. Please either enter a final payment date, or insert the words 'Until further notice' in which case your payments will be made until you cancel this instruction)	
CONFIRMATION	
Customer signature(s)	
Date	

Registered Charity Number: 1103850

Down's Syndrome Oxford Lottery Rules

1. The subscription to the DSO Lottery for one number/share shall be £5 per month payable by 10th of the month. This will give members one number which will be placed in a monthly draw. There is no provision to opt in/out on a month by month basis.
2. Members may have and are encouraged to have multiple subscriptions.
3. Anybody over 18 years can become a member of the lottery and you are encouraged to get family and friends to join.
4. Payment should be paid monthly into the Down Syndrome Oxford's allocated bank account by an online standing order or one year in advance by cash or cheque to the charity.
5. Each member is allocated a permanent number per share in the monthly draw. This number shall remain the member's provided their subscription is up to date.
6. A member is eligible for inclusion in the draw so long as the subscription for that month has been paid. If paid by BACs or Standing Order the money must be received in the correct DSO account by 10th of each month to be eligible in that month's draw.
7. There shall be one prize draw per month. The draw will take place on the 4th Wednesday of each month. With at least 3 DSO members present. Amendments may be made to carry out the draw on a different day if deemed necessary.
8. Monthly prizes will be awarded according for each month as follows:
 - 40% of the month's net payments shall make up the prize fund (max £200)
 - This will be paid out each month as 3 prizes - 50% First prize (max £100) 30% Second Prize (max £60) and 20% Third Prize (max £40).
 - The remaining 60% of the net payments will be allocated to the Down's Syndrome Oxford Charity.
9. The DSO lottery administrators will post the winners a cheque within a reasonable period after the monthly draw.
10. Results will be placed in the newsletter and on the Down Syndrome Oxford's web site.
11. The allocation of numbers and draw results will be available on request from the DSO lottery administrators.
12. Members wishing to leave the lottery should give two months notice.
13. The decision of the Down's Syndrome Oxford Committee shall be final in all matters requiring adjudication.
14. The Down's Syndrome Oxford Committee shall also have the power to amend or revoke these rules at their absolute discretion with such reasonable notice to the lottery members as is necessary.

18+ Club update

Bournemouth

We had a great day out to Bournemouth beach back in July. It was very busy, as you can imagine, and a very hot day. There was a really fun cliffside lift that we used to go up and down, and the water was lovely – Danny and Otto didn't get out for hours! We managed to get a parasol for some shade and we managed to get Otto out of the sea... when Daisy and Mark swam all the way out to get him.



Oxford

In September, we met up on Hythe Bridge in the centre of Oxford to attend one of the Oxford Open Door events. This was being run by the Inland Waterways Association, who had set up some information stalls about the canals and were offering free boat rides. We enjoyed some warm drinks from the refreshment stall while we queued up on what was quite a grey, chilly day, before boarding the canal boat.

We had a lovely time cruising along. They took us up the canal, through a lock, under the railway and on to the River Thames. The whole trip was almost an hour and came with a very informative and friendly guide. We would definitely recommend a canal boat trip to anyone else!

Ludlow

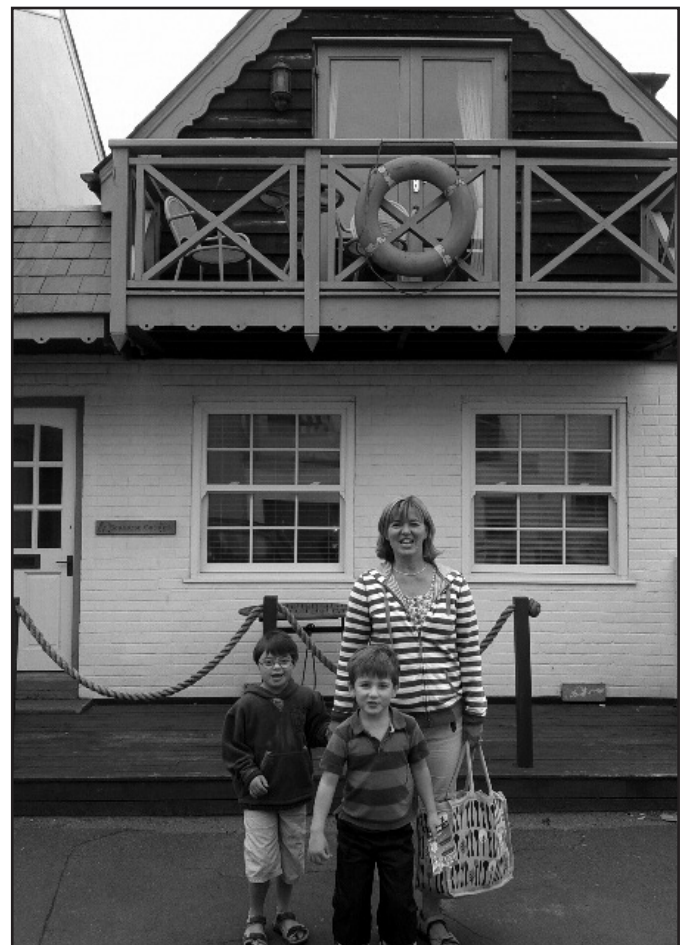


We met at Pear Tree Park and Ride in Oxford at 9.30am and got in the minibus we had hired for the day. It was quite a long journey and because everyone had got up early, most people slept on the way! We arrived at Sarah's house in Ludlow and she welcomed us in. She has a very nice home, and she a kitten called Charlie, who we all enjoyed playing with. We had some drinks and then Sarah served us a delicious lunch that she had been preparing all morning. We had beef casserole, vegan pizzas, sausages, soup: a real feast!

After lunch, we drove into Ludlow and went to the ruined castle. Some of us had a look around the castle, which was fantastic. It had lots of rooms to look in and old spiral stairs to explore. Others went into Ludlow and did some shopping. Ludlow is a very nice town and the castle was great. We would definitely recommend a visit! We then went back to Sarah's for tea and cake before getting ready to go home. We had such a nice time but the time went so quick. We'd love to go back again! Thanks Sarah!



Our kids! Some snapshots of our children enjoying themselves!



Summer Party!

A brilliant day down on the farm in Waterperry: Pimms, picnic and fantastic entertainment from Colonel Custard



Seren



Hannah



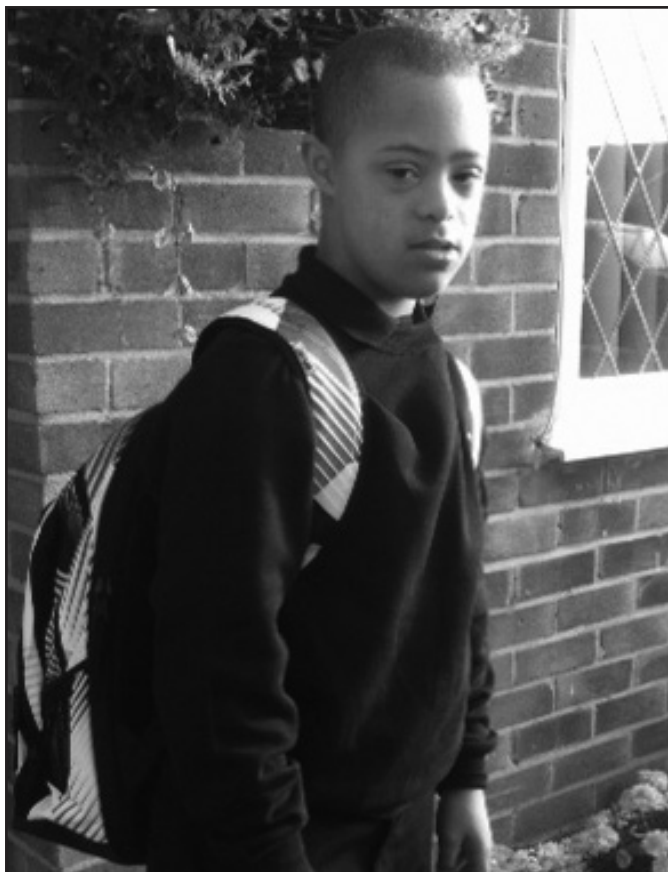
Lucy



Arthur



**Stuart
gets
splatted**



Clockwise from top left:
Thomas Foulds in the stocks at Corfe Castle
Chloe Sanderson playing the french horn
Joseph Stacey in the kitchen
Theo Blackstock's first day at Malborough
The Horrocks at Grandpa in my pocket's house
Jack Gill learning to use chopsticks
Archie Cunningham with Dunmore School's
Geoff the Teddy

Primary Club update

Dancing Queens (and Kings!)



Glitzy waistcoats, blow-up guitars, catchy music and a giant parachute – what more could parents and children want for a primary club activity?!



There were plenty of Super Troupers on display at Headington Community Hall in October as more than 20 children (those with Down's Syndrome plus siblings) took part in an Abba-inspired afternoon of dancing, singing and games.

Led by the two members from the Stagecoach Trust's InterAct Workshop team, the children learnt choreography – combined with their own improvised dance moves of course – and put together a special Mamma Mia Medley Mix. After accessorising with costume and guitars, the group finished with a performance to delighted parents!



The Stagecoach Charitable Trust provides disadvantaged children and young people with real opportunities to develop valuable skills for life through drama, movement and music workshops. InterAct Oxford meets at John Watson Secondary School in Holton every Thursday from 3.30-6pm.

For more information, go www.stagecoach.org.uk

Pre-school Club update



**Co-ordinator Helen Kingdon
writes:**

In the summer, the Pre-School Club went
shepherding!

Thanks to everyone who came; it was a great
turnout and lots of fun was had all round. Camilla
and Roly welcomed us to their farm and we got to
meet the sheep and get stuck in, and we even had
a go at herding the sheep!

The hay bales were a hit and we got to sample the
yummy lamb burgers that the farm produce. The
tractor trailer ride finished off our visit perfectly.
We are especially pleased to have welcomed two
new families on this trip.



Early Development Groups

EDG teacher Sally Dubock writes,

"After a summer break, Early Development Groups started again in September. In group 4 we have been looking at the story 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff'. The children have enjoyed acting out the story using puppets.

"The group have also looked at telling two-step stories using pictures of what happens. They have all progressed with their speech and sounds, which is fantastic and very rewarding.

"Counting bean bags into hoops was an entertaining session and one I think to be repeated!

"We are also trying hard to work on the children's short-term memory skills and, of course, had lots of fun with bubbles and blowing out candles!"

Stay and Play at South Abingdon Children's Centre

Stay and Play is an informal play session aimed at our 0-5 age group and runs alongside the Early Development Groups.

It is a great session to meet other parents and to have a well-earned cup of tea. There are plenty of toys, and siblings are welcome. A sensory room is available at most sessions.

Rowena Pearce, nurse specialist for complex needs, will be available at the first session of each month to answer any questions you may have.

We meet every Wednesday at South Abingdon Children's Centre 9.30am - 12pm. Look forward to seeing you there.

Ceilidh night – Saturday 8th February

Do you love dancing? Want to have a fun evening out and let your hair down?

DSO is organising a Ceilidh night on Saturday 8th February at Exeter Hall, Kidlington. Anne and Andrew Churchill-Stone (parents of Matthew, age 11) and their fellow musicians will be providing the music as well as giving us lots of encouragement and instruction on dancing some traditional Scottish and English country dancing.

Supper will be included in the ticket price, and there will also be a cash bar.



We hope it will be a good opportunity for parents to enjoy themselves in an informal way and to catch up with each other.

The event will be ticketed (price to be confirmed), and open to all DSO parents, families and supporters (as long as they are over 18).

We will email out further details in due course, and full details will be put on the website, or you can contact the organisers: Katharine Horrocks (01844 261424), Marion Simon (07834 380268) and Lucy Sanderson (01869 327055).

See, hear, do

It's been a long time since Ellie Walpole wrote anything for the DSO newsletter but she feels that suddenly there's a lot to share about her ten year-old son Thomas, particularly in relation to glasses and hearing aids.

During the October half term break last year, on the advice of Thomas' Year 4 teacher who had noticed that he had been complaining of sore eyes when he wore his **glasses**, we arranged a new eye test. Sure enough he needed a new prescription and miraculously after choosing a new pair he was finally happy to wear his glasses all the time.

A year later and with another new prescription I decided to go local (rather than to the JR) for his new frames so that we could have them mended nearby. Quite by chance we met a self-confessed frame geek at Robert Stanley opticians in Thame. She was very excited to reveal that she had recently been to an exhibition/conference and found an American frames manufacturer which specialized in glasses for children and adults with Down's Syndrome – 'Erin's World'.

The frames have a variety of shape and colours but most importantly the bridge is set lower so that they naturally look through the lens even when they have slipped down a bit. Without hesitation a selection of frames were ordered in for us to have a look at and now Thomas sports his 'new glasses' with pride. See the designs on www.specs4us.com and if you want to see them in the flesh, then try Robert Stanley. Erin's World also make clip-on 3D lenses to fit their frames!

When Thomas was about two he started trying to wear **hearing aids** and frankly we felt absolutely exhausted by the constant irritation that they caused him and subsequently us. He would NOT keep them in for more than a few moments to a few minutes. I think that one also needs to take into account that fluctuating hearing caused by glue ear can really vary from week to week. Thomas has exceptionally small ear drums and has now had two sets of grommets fitted, both of which had immediately positive results.

At the last review with Mr Ramsden about a year ago it was quite clear that due to the scarring (from the grommets) on Thomas' already tiny eardrum, they were now thickened and hearing aids would be inevitable even when the glue ear was less dense.

Thomas on a Victorian school trip

During one of Thomas' poor hearing periods, we then met with Heather Gilpin at the JR who was terrifically helpful. It became apparent that he was possibly lip reading when it came to determining the difference between simple words like 'lamb' and 'man' or 'moon' and 'spoon'. So although Thomas was hearing at high and low levels it was very hard for him to pick up the subtleties of the enunciation of words when she covered her mouth.



With new moulds and the levels in his new aids set to reflect his exact needs we cracked on with a new reward chart for wearing his aids. Obviously Thomas is a bit older and now recognises that it is better to hear clearly and that good hearing can help with good talking and this is the best reward... along with Skylanders for the X-Box!

DS Active Tennis for All

Finally, I've found out about a terrific tennis group run at **RAF Halton**. This might be slightly too far to travel for some but it is just outside Wendover in Buckinghamshire. A very able instructor named Alex has three groups of tennis players on **Saturdays** with the youngest beginners at 12pm.

Thomas had shown some interest and even aptitude for tennis at school last year and so we thought it worth a try. The younger group, most of whom have Down's Syndrome, play games and use rackets (all supplied) with larger sponge balls and everyone had a great time.

The older or more experienced are using normal tennis balls and with a mixture of warm up games and working on catching and hitting skills the hour passed quickly. Thomas is keen to go back.

Have a look at Halton Tennis or see the DS Active website for details then contact Tom Wood on tom@tomandsuewood.com

What next?

I know not everyone is like me, but when Katie was born my first question was "Will she drive?"

Now I know at one day old that is rather more like asking, "What happens in the end?" than "What next?", but I have found that, thus far, I often find myself asking "What next?" for Katie, and just in case you do the same for your younger children, this is what was next for Katie after leaving primary school, and having a couple of years at mainstream secondary.

At first, school were quite surprised that I planned on Katie staying at Bartholomew to do her GCSE years, but they soon rose to the challenge. After lots of planning in Year 9, she has now joined the Alternative Curriculum (A band) which is something the school run anyway for those 10 or 15 children in each year group that they think would benefit from smaller classes and different options to the 'typical' ten GCSEs.

Katie has small classes with the other students in the A band, for her main subjects (English, maths and science). She also does DT, which, at the request of the parents, is Food Tech. Then she was allowed to choose another GCSE, and chose French (her great-grandmother is French), and on top of that does one day a week at college on a Hospitality and Catering course for 14-16s.

For two PE sessions a week, I either take her into the gym with the cycling and running machines etc at school, or take her for a climbing lesson at Oxford Brookes. We were finding that group sports were a bit tricky as she got run over!



She then has Learning for Life, assemblies, and some 1:1 time with her TA. So, all in all, so far, so good.

Katie says, "I think school is good. I like my lessons especially work skills. My dad drove me into school, then I get on the public bus with Jess, Tim, Mrs Beckett and probably Moira to go to college. My teacher in college speaks in a French accent and he is called Thomas Clavier. I have about two years left at school, and then I am going to get a job. Next I am going to find a boyfriend."

by Colette Lloyd

DSO programme of training: contact details needed

Following a discussion at the AGM, back in June, it was agreed that DSO would fund and put together a programme of training and workshops for parents and any professionals who work with children or adults with Down's Syndrome including nursery/school/college teachers and TAs.

We then asked our members to complete a questionnaire so that we could gauge the topics which people are interested in. Thank you if you took the time to complete the questionnaire, we now feel we have a better idea of the training sessions people would like us to organise.

You may or may not be surprised to hear that the most chosen topic was Behaviour Management. Over the next year, and hopefully beyond, we are planning to run a number of workshops and training sessions in different venues around Oxfordshire and at different times of the day and week so that as many people as possible have the opportunity to attend.

(continued on p17)

Riding for the Disabled – Abingdon Group

Our son Matthew has been going along to Riding for the Disabled Abingdon (RDA) since he was two and a half years old.

Now aged 11 he is very confident on a horse although he is still far too content to let the leader and the horse do all the work. He has experienced a variety of one-hour classes during his time (including a period of one-to-one sessions whilst between groups) but essentially all have centred around fun-based activities to improve posture, core strength and balance as well as self-confidence. The riders also begin to learn about looking after the ponies.

The ponies are fabulous and so patient (if a little slow sometimes in the gymkhana!). Different class leaders bring different skills but all have been motivated by love of the work and children and driven by the hope that the children will achieve an independence on horseback which will be with them always.

Every year RDA Abingdon holds a fun day in which the riders take part in 'handy pony' classes as well gymkhana groups, and they also have a chance to do the 'Pony Knowledge' challenge which is tailored for different needs. The younger riders have a fancy dress competition as well; on horseback of course.

Although RDA may be perceived to be accessed by riders with primarily physical disabilities, RDA Abingdon boasts at least two classes which are only for riders with Down's Syndrome so that the learning can be tailored appropriately.



Here is Matthew on 'Mr Brown', about to go out for a walk along the country lanes!

RDA Abingdon is a charity and has high overhead costs as you might imagine (anything to do with horses!). All the class leaders and helpers are volunteers which is a huge commitment. We do pay a contribution for the lessons but it is a small one when one considers the expense of mainstream riding lessons.

Find out more on their website at www.rda-abingdon.org.uk and the contact email address is rda@greytiles.plus.com

by Anne Churchill Stone

(continued from p16)

Some sessions will be run for parents and others will be more suited to professionals. We hope to cover topics relevant to all age ranges and we plan to use a range of training providers.

While we are putting this programme together we thought it would be useful if members could forward the contact details of their child's nursery or school. All training will be advertised widely to our members but we want to make sure we are also reaching all of those professionals who work with our children and who would benefit or be interested in any training we are running locally.



Please send the contact name and address of your child's nursery/school/college to primary@dsoxford.org.uk and watch out for emails for further details.



Gift Aid declaration

Please tick appropriate response:

☐ I would like DSO to reclaim the tax on all donations I've made since April 2000 and all my future donations until further notice. I understand that I must pay an amount of income tax or capital gains tax at least equal to the tax DSO reclaims on my donation(s).

☐ I am not a UK taxpayer

I enclose my gift of £_____ (cheque/PO payable to Down's Syndrome Oxford)

OR

A regular gift of £_____ per month/quarter/year (delete as applicable)

Commencing on the ____ (day) ____ (month) ____ (year)

Name of bank: _____

Address of bank: _____

Postcode: _____

Current Account No: _____ Sort Code: __ - __ - __

Signature: _____ Date: ____/____/____

Bank ref: _____	(completed by DSO)
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Bank Instructions: please pay the above amount on the same day of every month/quarter/year (as indicated) thereafter to Lloyds TSB bank (30-94-04) for the account of Down's Syndrome Oxford (a/c 01154094).

Please return this slip to DSO, not your bank, c/o Treasurer DSO, Sarah Stevenson, 12 Green Close, Bicester, Oxfordshire, OX26 6QU

We will not share your information with any other organizations.

Your Name: _____

Your Address: _____

Postcode: _____

In memory of Freddie Perry

We received the following letter from Rachael Warwick, headteacher of Didcot Girls' School:

"As many of you will be aware, a terrible car accident involving a ten year old boy, Freddie Perry, and a member of our staff took place outside the school on Oxford Crescent on the evening of 10th September. As a school community, we are deeply shocked and saddened by Freddie's death. We extend our sincere and heartfelt condolences to Freddie's parents and sisters and to his extended family for their terrible loss.

"Mr and Mrs Perry have asked for donations to Down's Syndrome Oxford instead of flowers for Freddie's funeral: Freddie's sister, Rhiannon, has Down's Syndrome. With Mr and Mrs Perry's permission, we have set up this JustGiving page to enable DGS families, staff and governors to make a donation to Down's Syndrome Oxford in Freddie's memory and in support of his family."

Almost £500 has been raised in memory of Freddie, for which we are hugely grateful. Freddie was a member of Stephen Freeman Community Primary School, Didcot.

Apps review

Ellie Walpole writes:

My ten year-old Thomas is a bit of a demon when it comes to the App Store (don't worry he has not mastered my password) but we have found some terrific apps which you might like to try out.

Endless Alphabet – not so much an alphabet but a brilliant animated set of words like 'itchy', 'underneath', LOADS of entertainment

Jungle Geometry – a lovely easy way of looking at angles, lengths, perimeters etc

Widget Tudors, Victorians and Egyptians – using symbols to reinforce the written word and some excellent pre-made summaries for school history

Book Creator – Thomas' TAs use this on an almost daily basis as his home/school diary. An amazing way to share his day

Tick Tock – a brilliant interactive clock – great for all the family

Montessori Word – lovely animation 'reward' after each word spelt correctly, lots of ways to use it with upper and lower case tools.

Donations (July-October 13)

The following money has been given or raised for DSO in the last few months, for which we're extremely grateful.

Donations include:

The Mud Cows aka Sam, Karen, Sarah and Ariana: 10K Wolf Run	£440
Collection tin in Gap	£241.22 (so far)
Sarah and Dean Fonge family fundraiser	£1,444
The Phoenix International Charity	£50
Asda Community Life	
Templars Square Cowley	£25
Dancemania	£480.50
Oxford Gene Technology	£500
Waitrose Henley	£390
Football tournament	£611.68
Nicola Mundy	£382.30
Trueman	£200

Justgiving so far

Sherryl Blowfield Blenheim 10K	£75
Emma Beauchamp	
Oxford half marathon	£52
Sarah Fonge	
Oxford half marathon	£378
Rob Brody	
Iron Man Wales	£467.33

A huge thanks as well to all those who give regularly by standing order. You can use the form on the previous page to send one-off or regular gifts.

Please remember to fill in a GIFT AID declaration for your donations wherever possible.

There is no extra cost to you and the process is simple. It means that DSO receives an extra 28p for every £1 given to us by UK taxpayers.

If you need any guidance on this, please contact DSO treasurer Sarah Stevenson (details on the back cover).

Contact us

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down's syndrome oxford

Registered charity number: 1103850

With thanks again to First Move direct marketing in High Wycombe who very generously prints and mails our newsletter free-of-charge.



The deadline for the March 2014 issue of the newsletter is Monday 4 February. We welcome any text or photos about your child enjoying themselves – not necessarily at a DSO event. Please send material to the editor Andrew Dubock at media@dsoxford.org.uk