# About YDSSG

# York Down Syndrome Support Group was formally constituted as York Down Syndrome Parents Group in July 2012. In February 2021 YDSSG formally registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation using a Foundation model hence its Trustees are the only formal members of the charity.

# The group grew from a Facebook group and monthly gatherings of parents at a local children’s centre. Today we run weekly speech and language groups for younger children, weekly football sessions and other social activities. We provide hospital information packs, and personally welcome new parents if they wish to meet in person. We support professionals working with our children in educational settings, with regular sessions for teaching staff as well as more bespoke input to childcare settings. The group has an extensive library of books and educational resources available for parents and professionals to borrow. Our parents’ Facebook group continues to be a source of linkage and information and we regularly mail out information to families.

The York landscape of groups and organisations who support and work with children, young people and adults who have additional needs can be quite complex. Many groups provide activities and services. Some groups have very high social media profiles with very active fundraising strategies, whereas older/longer established groups tend to be less engaged in social media activity and have different types of presence and profile within the community. In the past YDSSG has focused community fundraising efforts on one high profile event per year however more recently the need to raise funds to support group activities (particularly professional therapy input) has prompted more active fundraising campaigns. We have recently been successful in securing small amounts of grant funding from charitable trusts. Our aim in undertaking the work that we do, is to provide mutual support to all who support us. We wish to enhance add value to statutory services that our families are legally entitled to. We primarily seek to complement rather than replicate services that are provided by other charities.

**Role Description - Chair of Trustees**

Remuneration: The role of Chair is not accompanied by any financial remuneration, although reasonable expenses may be claimed

Time commitment: In total approx. 5 -10 hours per month broken down as follows:

Attendance and prep for monthly Trustee meetings (approx. 2-3 hours)

Liaison with Trustees (approx. 1-2 hours)

Attend key YDSSG events and represent the Charity at events/meetings with key stakeholders. This will vary according to the activity of the group and outside events, but we would not expect it to take more than 2 – 5 additional hours per month

Reporting to Board of Trustees (Executive Committee)

**Personal Qualities**

* A proven leader, who is comfortable and willing to lead the organisation.
* Possession of tact, diplomacy and powers of persuasion.
* A good listener who has empathy and understanding
* Understanding and knowledge about the lives of those who have learning disabilities.

**Overall**

* Lead the Committee of Trustees to ensure that all the organisation’s activities enable it to meet the charities objectives and responsibilities.
* To ensure an effective relationship between:
  + the Trustees and the wider group
  + the Trustees and external stakeholders/community
* Act as a spokesperson and figurehead
* Increase the profile of the Charity in the local community exploring networking opportunities and possible nominated charity opportunities.
* To supervise, support and co-ordinate the trustees engaged in delivering the day to day work of the group
* Be an ambassador for the charity, raising the profile of the charity in the local community and especially on special occasions such as World Down Syndrome Day on 21st March

**Specifically**

* Plan and prepare the Trustee committee meetings and the AGM with other Trustees and charity staff as appropriate.
* To oversee and sign off the annual report of the Charity ensuring that the report to the Charity Commission is submitted on time
* Chair Trustee committee meetings ensuring:
  + A balance is struck between time-keeping and space for discussions.
  + Business is dealt with and decisions made.
  + Decisions, actions and deliberations are adequately minuted.
  + The implementation of decisions is clearly assigned and monitored.
* Chair appointment panels for any key paid staff within the charity
* Ensure adequate support/supervision arrangements are made for Staff and volunteers who undertake work on behalf the group who are directly managed or report to the Trustees
* To lead investigation of any complaint concerning the organisation (unless it involves the chair specifically)
* Support the Trustees to find a successor and do a full hand over of responsibilities