

Down's Syndrome Scotland's position on Education for Children with Down's syndrome

Down's Syndrome Scotland is a national organisation, supporting people with Down's syndrome, their families and the professionals working with them.

Down's Syndrome Scotland endorse the government policies with regard to inclusion, believing that all children should receive the provision that is appropriate to their individual needs and situation.

Down's Syndrome Scotland believe that it is the duty of all local authorities to provide the best education and care for all children with disabilities. This would include both mainstream and special needs provision.

Down's Syndrome Scotland believe that parents, carers and children with Down's syndrome should be provided with the correct level of information about Down's syndrome and the different kinds of educational support available to them during the early years. This will allow them to make an informed choice regarding their child's educational provision.

More children with Down's syndrome are accessing mainstream education than ever before. It is the view of Down's Syndrome Scotland that with the correct level of support children with Down's syndrome can benefit from very successful educational experiences within this type of environment. We also believe that their peers can benefit from this experience too.

Down's Syndrome Scotland believe that successful inclusion of a child with Down's syndrome both within mainstream and special educational schools depends on the following support being put in place:

- Appropriate resources to support differentiation of the curriculum
- The attitude of the school and in relation to putting the correct level of education and support in order that each child will reach their full potential

- Peer support in order to sustain successful inclusion and the possibilities of long term, sustainable friendships
- Ongoing staff development regarding differentiation of the curriculum and supporting a child with Down's syndrome.

The Local Authority should support the educational choice made by the parents and child, by putting the appropriate resources in place that will help to support the successful inclusion of the child throughout their years within the chosen educational environment.

However, mainstream education may not be appropriate for all children with Down's syndrome. It should be recognised that some children with more complex and profound needs may benefit from the support offered by Special Needs Schools.

Parents and children with Down's syndrome must be part of the decision-making process from the beginning regarding the most appropriate educational establishment.

For further information regarding the support that Down's Syndrome Scotland can offer please contact:

The Children's Worker
Down's Syndrome Scotland
158/160 Balgreen Road
Edinburgh
Scotland
EH11 3AU

Or telephone: 0131 313 4225