



# Using iPads and other tablets to teach and assess the progress of children with Down syndrome

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# William



Born in 2005 with Down syndrome and many medical complications, later diagnosed with autism.

Successfully included in mainstream school (primary and secondary).



Our Family Journey from Pregnancy to Teenage Years

Beverley Dean MBE and Joseph Dean

14:40 – 15:10 tomorrow in room Alsh 1



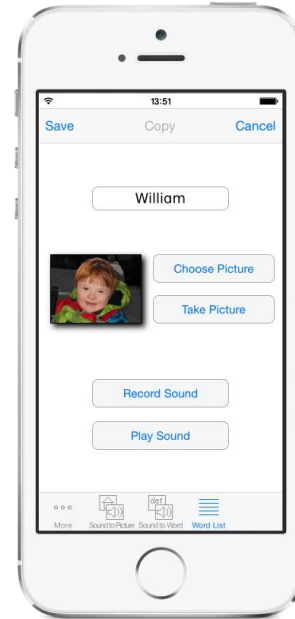
# Many apps...

- ★ Track what you are doing
- ★ Pop up adverts and requests to rate or review
- ★ Have rewards that overwhelm activities
- ★ Are only in US English (not British or other languages)
- ★ Only work when online
- ★ Have expensive subscriptions or in-app purchases
- ★ Aren't being maintained
- ★ Have no evidence of benefits



# A good app should...

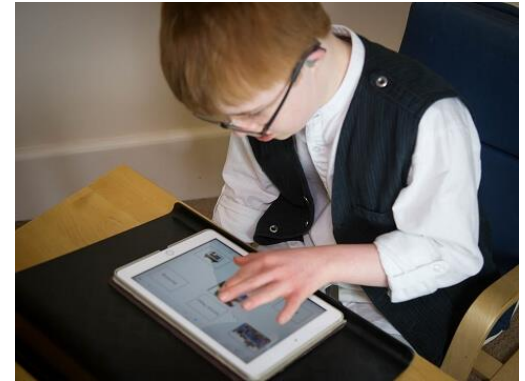
- ★ Be engaging but not over-stimulating
- ★ Enable learning in small steps
- ★ Have no negative rewards
- ★ Offer settings, e.g. adjust level of difficulty
- ★ Be easy to personalise with own content
- ★ Empower those with limited speech or handwriting to demonstrate what they know
- ★ Grow with the individual
- ★ Respect your privacy





AWARDS 2018  
FINALIST

# Special Words



*“This is without a doubt the best app I have come across for children with special needs.”*

Helen Taylor, Head of Primary, Villa Real School, Consett, UK



# The Durham iPad Project

- ★ 12-week project in 6 UK primary schools with 13 children, aged 3-7
- ★ Range of communication, language & literacy difficulties
- ★ Use Special Words app on daily basis for 10-15 minutes
- ★ Pre-assessment task to obtain baseline data
- ★ Identical post-assessment task to obtain impact data

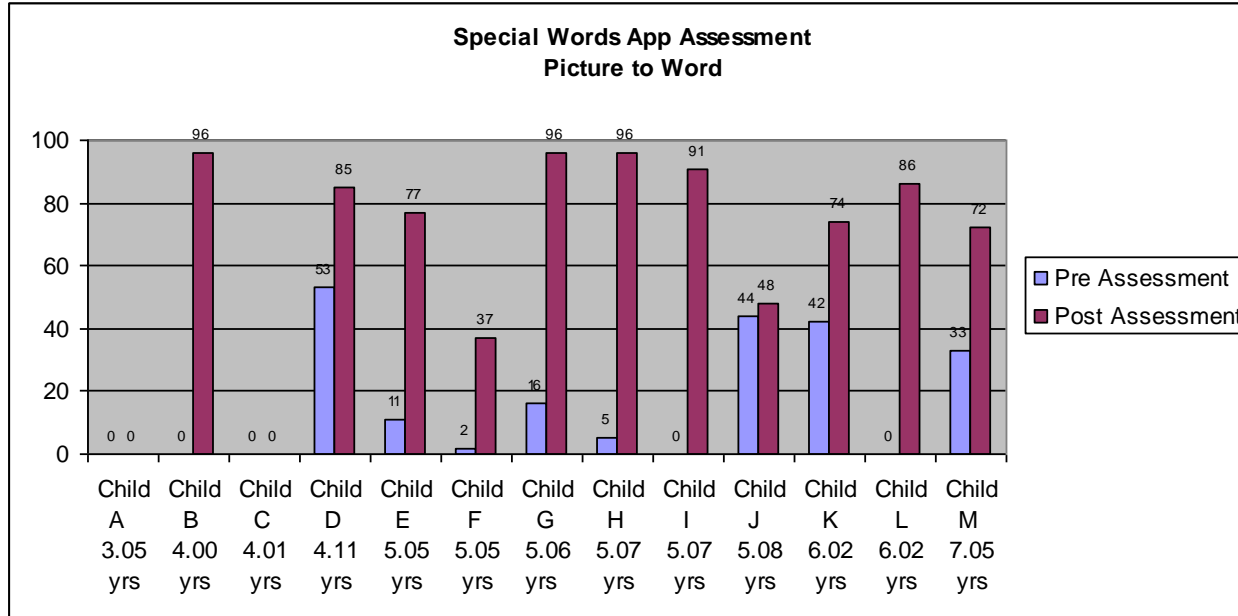
Focused on 5 areas of development:

language and reading, fine motor skills, concentration, confidence, motivation



[www.specialiapps.org/pdf/durham-ipad-project-report-june-2012.pdf](http://www.specialiapps.org/pdf/durham-ipad-project-report-june-2012.pdf)

# Sight Vocabulary and Reading Skills

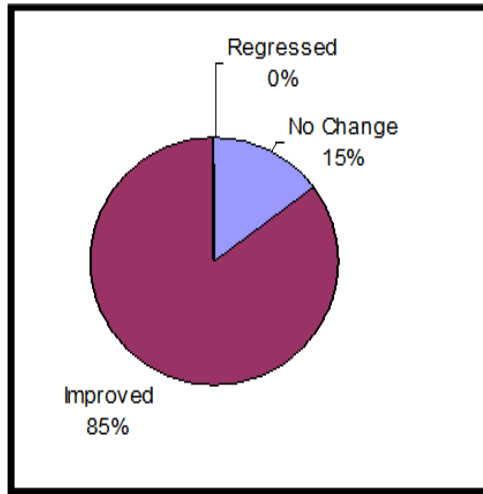


Number of written words correctly matched

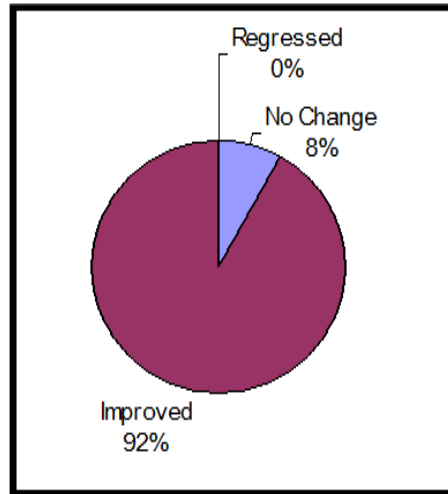


# Additional areas of progress

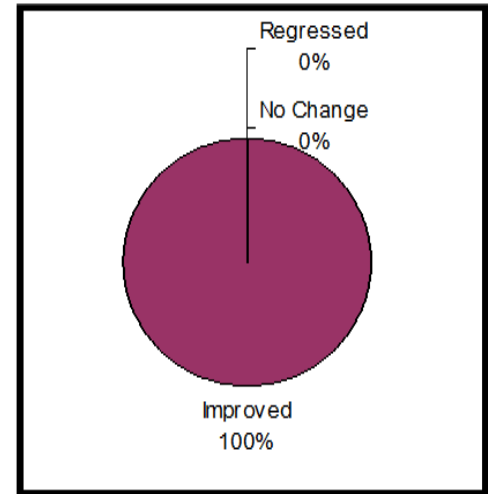
Motivation to learn



Pupil confidence



Fine motor skills





# Durham SEND and Inclusion App Resource

| App icon  | App name        | Description   | Available for iPad, Android and/or Windows  | Cost   | Switch accessible   | Skills developed  | Suggested uses  |
|---|-----------------|---|---|--------|---|---|---|
|  | Special Words   | An app containing structured activities using 96 key words. Can be easily personalised with your own words, pictures and audio. Compatible with other Special iApp apps e.g. Special Stories. Also available in 23 different languages. | <br>iPad<br><br>Android | £12.99 |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhanced communication, language and literacy skills</li> <li>Development of expressive and receptive language</li> <li>Development of word recognition, reading and listening skills</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individually with and without support</li> <li>Small group work</li> <li>Paired work</li> <li>Targeted speech and language intervention work</li> <li>Opportunities for remediation and over learning</li> </ul>   |
|  | Special Stories | Create your own stories with text, pictures and sound. Can read & share stories via email, PDF and iBooks.  | <br>iPad<br><br>Android | £12.99 |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhanced communication</li> <li>Development of language and literacy skills</li> <li>Reading</li> <li>Writing</li> <li>Word &amp; sentence level work</li> </ul>                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individually with and without support</li> <li>Small group work</li> <li>Paired work</li> <li>Whole class teaching.</li> <li>Make social stories, topic work, instructions, news, home/school diary/communication</li> <li>Use as an alternative method of recording written work</li> </ul> |





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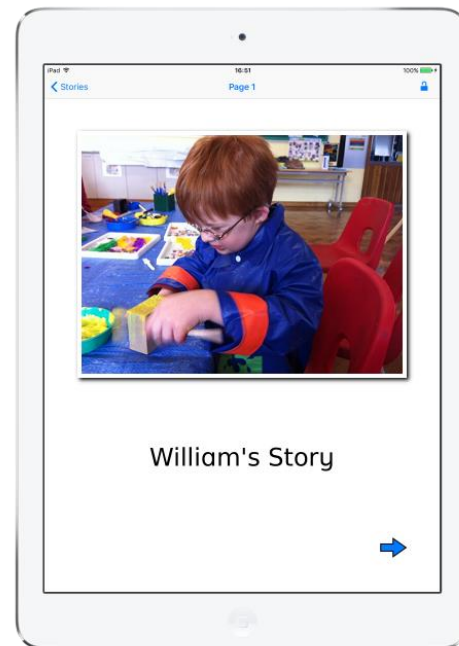
# Special Stories



- ★ Talking books
- ★ Social Stories
- ★ Home – school communication
- ★ Encourage speech
- ★ Improve reading skills
- ★ Share and print
- ★ Transfer content to and from Special Words

*“It has transformed the life of a pupil I work with.”*

Anne Lawton, SEN Teacher, Tralee, Ireland



# International Credits

Special iApps would like to thank over 50 volunteers from around the world who have helped us make our apps available in more than 20 languages, including:

- ★ Kledjan and Emanuela Zaimi of Down Syndrome Albania Foundation
- ★ Dinka Vukovic of Hrvatska zajednica za Down sindrom, Croatia
- ★ Lars Erik Brustad of Norsk Nettverk for Down Syndrom, Norway
- ★ Gün Bilgin and Fulya Ekmen of Down Sendromu Derneği Türkiye
- ★ Tania Mykhailenko of Ukrainian Charitable Down Syndrome Organisation



# References and Contacts

Durham SEND and Inclusion App Resource

[www.countydurhamfamilies.info/sendapp](http://www.countydurhamfamilies.info/sendapp)

The Durham iPad Project

Brown, J. (2012) SEND & Inclusion Service, Durham County Council

[www.specialiapps.org/pdf/durham-ipad-project-report-june-2012.pdf](http://www.specialiapps.org/pdf/durham-ipad-project-report-june-2012.pdf)

Young pupils' their teacher's and classroom assistants' experiences of iPads in a Northern Ireland school:  
"Four and five years old, who would have thought they could do that?"

Clarke, L. & Abbott, L. (2015) British Journal of Educational Technology

[doi:10.1111/bjet.12266](https://doi.org/10.1111/bjet.12266) (<https://dx.doi.org>)

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