Dear Head

**JOIN US IN CELEBRATING WORLD DOWN SYNDROME DAY ON MONDAY 21st MARCH 2016**

**AND WEAR ‘LOTS OF SOCKS’**

World Down Syndrome Day takes place every year on 21st March and we would love it if your school or nursery would take part in this year’s celebration to raise awareness of Down syndrome and raise vital funds for your local charity Downright Special. The theme this year is “My Friends, My Community -what it means to be included”, with the aim of celebrating people with Down’s syndrome, of all ages, who are part of our communities –at home, in schools and colleges, in workplaces, clubs and social groups.

As a school who has received lots of free support from us, we would really appreciate it if you would join us, other organisations, schools/ nurseries in this area and many other people worldwide in this fun and easy way to raise money and get everyone talking about what it means to have Down syndrome, help raise awareness of what Down syndrome is, and how people with Down syndrome play a vital role in our lives and communities.

People with Down syndrome have an extra chromosome (they have three copies of chromosome 21 instead of two) and the ‘ Lots of Socks’ fundraising campaign is a worldwide campaign run by Down Syndrome International.

We ask that everyone comes to school or work on Monday 21st March wearing lots of brightly coloured, patterned or odd socks (or even wearing 3 socks for 3 chromosomes) and makes a voluntary donation of £1.

The enclosed leaflet explains the origins of the ‘Lots of Socks’ idea and we have also enclosed some information on how to take part.

The money raised will help us to continue our work supporting children with Down syndrome across Hull and East Yorkshire and in particular will help us in our plans to provide regular training days for nursery and school staff in the inclusion of children with Down syndrome in mainstream settings.

For more information about what we do then please have a look at our website or if you are interested in other ideas for how you can support us then you can download our fundraising pack http://www.downrightspecial.co.uk/fundraising

Many thanks for your support and please don’t hesitate to get in touch if you would like further information.

Kind regards

Gillian Bowlas

Charity Manager

**Why Lots of Socks?**



This is a picture of chromosomes which some say look a little bit like pairs of socks. Sometimes people have an extra ‘sock’ or chromosome and a person with Down syndrome has an extra copy of chromosome 21 as you can see in the picture. That’s ok – it just means that some things a little harder for them. They are a little different but different is ok. People with Down syndrome learn, laugh, love, live and, just like the rest of us, sometimes also get cross, sad, dislike things, get uncomfortable being stared at and just want to join in with everyone else. Where children with Down syndrome and other disabilities are given opportunities to join in, all children benefit from this and environments of friendship, acceptance, respect for everyone and high expectations are created.

Inclusive environments also help to prepare all today’s children for life as tomorrow’s adults, enabling adults with Down syndrome to live, work and join-in, with confidence and independence, fully included in society alongside their friends and peers.

On World Down Syndrome Day, Monday 21 March 2016, join us to encourage children and adults with Down syndrome to say “My Friends, My Community” and get the world talking about the benefits for everyone of inclusive environments.

**What to do next**

1. **Let us know that you are taking part** by emailing office@downrightspecial.co.uk . Please feel free to ask if you need any other information to help you with the day. We can provide leaflets about Down syndrome, information about Downright Special, collection tins etc. if you would find that useful.
2. **Ask** **everyone in your nursery, school, club or workplace to wear their brightest, patterned or odd socks** on Monday 21st March in exchange for a suggested donation of £1
3. **Send us your photos** - we’d love to see any photos of the day. Email office@downrightspecial.co.uk or post them on social media. You’ll find us on [facebook.com/DownrightSpecialNetwork](https://www.facebook.com/DownrightSpecialNetwork/) or on Twitter @Downright21. Please use the hashtags #WDSD16 and #lotsofsocks
4. **Any donations would be very gratefully received** in any of the following ways:
	* Send a cheque made out to ‘The Downright Special Network’ to:

The Treasurer

Downright Special

Bodmin Road Church Office

Padstow Close

Hull HU7 4HE

* By BACS:

 Sort Code: 40 52 40, Account Number 00024883, Account Name: The Downright Special Network. Please put your organisation’s name in the Reference box.

* Ring us on 01482 420160 and arrange for someone to collect your donation
1. **We will then send you a ‘Certificate of Appreciation’** that you can display so that we can say a ‘Downright Special’ thank you to everyone involved and acknowledge receipt of your donation.

**Thank you so much for your support and we hope you enjoy wearing ‘Lots of Socks’ and celebrating World Down Syndrome Day on 21st March!**