

LETS Go! UK

Language – language intervention and research
Education – supporting children from birth to adulthood
Training – for parents and professionals
Speech – speech and language therapy
www.letsgouk.org

Down Syndrome Education International
www.dseinternational.org

www.letsgouk.org

Language Education Training Speech

Education Survey

A survey of the educational experiences of children with Down syndrome currently in UK schools.



Education Survey Link: <http://i.mp/2WSro9l>

www.letsgouk.org

Language Education Training Speech

LETS Go!

Reviewing the learning profile associated with having Down syndrome

www.letsgouk.org

Language Education Training Speech

The learning profile

- A specific learning profile
- Measures skills against non-verbal mental age
- See a profile of strength areas and areas of more difficulty
- Variability within groups and within individual children
- Using this information to adapt teaching methods, resources and environments

www.letsgouk.org

Language Education Training Speech

Associated health issues

- Hearing difficulties
 - Regular checks and ACTION!
 - Wearing hearing aids – support from hearing impairment team
 - Understanding what your child's hearing loss means
 - Additional strategies for all children
 - Additional cues e.g. eye-contact and non-verbal information
 - Learning environment e.g. background noise, positioning
 - Visual supports e.g. use of pictures, objects and signs

www.letsgouk.org

Language Education Training Speech

Associated health issues

- Visual difficulties
 - Regular checks and recommendations
 - Wearing glasses – support from the visual impairment team
 - Visual learning strength – make the most of visual input
 - Clear pictures
 - Uncluttered environments
 - Reducing visual distraction
 - Print size

www.letsgouk.org

Language Education Training Speech



Associated health issues

- Heart – approx. 50%, screening as newborn
 - Down's Heart Group www.dhg.org.uk
- Bowel – approx. 10%, can lead to vomiting, constipation and problems with feeding
- Digestive difficulties – constipation, diarrhoea and gastro-oesophageal reflux
- Thyroid – most commonly low, tired, cold, poor growth, dry skin, constipation
- Infections – more prone to infections, may take longer to recover/become more serious. Immunisations.
- Delayed motor skills in the early years
- Sleep

www.letsgekouk.org

Language Education Training Speech




Areas of difficulty – verbal STM

- Working memory – a system of inter-linked memory components
 - Verbal short term memory (STM)
 - (Visual short term memory)
 - Central Executive
- Processing of verbal information
 - Effects remembering new words
 - Understanding spoken language
 - Following verbal instructions
 - Calculations/mental maths

www.letsgekouk.org

Language Education Training Speech




Areas of difficulty – Speech and Language

- One of the biggest areas of difficulty for children with Down syndrome – not a 'global delay'
- Within the speech and language umbrella there are areas of strength and difficulty
 - Communication skills – strength
 - Vocabulary understanding – strength
 - Language understanding – more difficult
 - Expressive vocabulary – more difficult
 - Speech – more difficult

www.letsgekouk.org

Language Education Training Speech




Areas of strength

- Visual short term memory – use visual supports throughout learning
 - Use of modelling – the importance of settings that include good models of speech, language, behaviour, learning and play skills
 - Use of pictures, objects, acting out
 - Use of sign
 - Use of print

www.letsgekouk.org

Language Education Training Speech




Areas of strength

- Social skills and social understanding
 - Better than non-verbal mental age
 - Expect age appropriate behaviour
 - Learning is social – importance of mainstream settings, groups and clubs
 - Develop independence skills from early – most adults have good independence and daily living skills (much better than NVMA) if expectations are high and skills are developed

www.letsgekouk.org

Language Education Training Speech



Why teach to the profile

- All skills are learnt through everyday interactions and experiences – good parents/teachers/support staff will be good at teaching all children
- The activities and strategies will benefit many children
- Build on strengths to support areas of difficulty
- Start early and continue to develop targets in all areas throughout education
- Evidence shows it is possible to change the profile

www.letsgekouk.org

Language Education Training Speech

