



## CEO REPORT

Welcome to our 10th newsletter and the first newsletter of Reach Deaf Services.

As we come to the end of the year I can honestly say this year by far was one of the busiest and challenging years in the history of the organization. We have seen so many positive changes this year detailed throughout the newsletter but have also had to navigate our way through the covid pandemic. A special thank you to our front line staff for continuing to provide such dedication and commitment under these circumstances.

We successfully decongregated out of St Josephs House for Deaf and Deaf Blind Adults on 29th of October 2021. In addition we successfully re-branded our trading name to Reach Deaf Services. We were also delighted to celebrate the organization been in its 175th year and we marked this through a number of activities which are featured within the newsletter.

We would like to acknowledge the HSE for their continued support to the organisation. We were delighted to have been approved for a full time ISL teaching resource. This will help the organization deliver quality supports through ISL to our boarders and service users.

A special thank you to our boarders, service users, and families who have continued to be very supportive in very challenging circumstances. Our staff continue to deliver much needed services and I would like to acknowledge their hard work and effort whilst in the midst of rising covid numbers and increased protocols for infection control. Without our staff we would not be where we are today.



A special thanks also to the chair of the Board Geraldine Tallon, our Board and Committee members who continue to give up their time freely to assist us.

We were delighted to have been short listed for the Good Governance awards(Annual Report Category 5) and whilst we didn't scoop the award on the evening we will continue to focus on improving governance across the organization.

I hope you enjoy this newsletter and wish you all a safe and happy Christmas.

Tara McBreen



## HR REPORT

Mary Stringer

In the last few months we have been busy continuing on with our recruitment campaign to ensure we are fully resourced for the community model. We are still recruiting for support workers and nurses and are on track to have these positions filled by the end of the year. To ensure success of the community model we have a number of new positions that will be filled over the coming weeks.

We have expanded our interpreting team by another part time position and are in the process of advertising for two part time ISL teachers. This is with the view to enhancing and promoting access and the use of ISL as the first language of Reach Deaf Services.

The end of October was an exciting and sad time as we closed the doors to St Joseph's House for the very last time. Along with the closure of the building we also said goodbye to a number of staff who have been with us for many years. Gabor Alattyanyi (chef), Magda Synak – Pawlitzak (cleaner), Vera Young (cleaning manager) and Irina Banghianov (staff nurse).

We also said a sad farewell to Geraldine Gallagher (Director of Care). In Geraldine's own words, 'she decided to retire with the house'. Geraldine has contributed greatly to the success of St Joseph's House and was a great advocate for the service users. We wish everyone all the best of luck and they will all be missed very much by service users and colleagues.

At the end of November, we said goodbye to Emer Nolan (Quality, Standards and Compliance Manager). Emer joined the organisation 6 years ago as a social care leader in the boarding campus. We wish Emer the very best of luck in her new role.

The HR department along with a working group of staff members, planned the events for the 175th anniversary celebrations and rebranding of CIDP. The week went off without a hitch thanks to the many staff who helped with planning all the activities.



# 175TH ANNIVERSARY REPORT

On the 20th September we celebrated 175 years of the organisation being in existence. We started off the celebration with the St Joseph's House memory book launch and Mass at Deaf Village Ireland. The following day, we planted new trees in the Deaf Village Ireland Campus and with planting the trees we had a time capsule buried in conjunction with the Holy Family School for the Deaf. The children had created posters and books of their dreams for the future. The time capsule will be opened in 25 years when we celebrate 200 years. A Plaque will be placed to mark the time capsule.

On the Wednesday the weather stayed good and we had a BBQ for the services users from St Joseph's House & Community and a separate BBQ for the Boarding Campus.

On Thursday, a presentation was kindly provided on Zoom on the history of CIDP and impact on the local community. Our very own Dominic McGreal was one of the presenters alongside Micheal Lynch from local community college.

Then on the Friday we were excited to launch the strategic plan 2022 - 2027 and the rebrand to Reach Deaf Services. The launch of the brand was well received and we had lots of positive feedback.

On the Saturday, we had a 5km walk from Deaf Village Ireland to Papal Cross in Phoenix Park, it was also part of ISL Awareness Week.

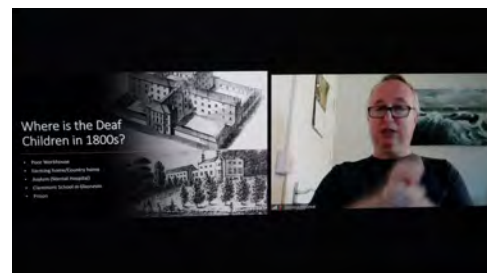
On the final day of the week, we had a closing mass with the Archbishop of Dublin along with Father Paddy Boyle and Father Steven Monaghan. We were very appreciative of the Archbishop joining us. You can find Geraldine Tallon (our Chairperson`s) closing mass speech on the link below

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=FBa8GDmfqU0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FBa8GDmfqU0)

A massive thank you to the committee team who made this happen and also to everyone who took part, it was a wonderful week

The link below is the story behind our rebranding

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eyVmAg7unc>



# HEAD OF ADULT SERVICES

Linda Tierney



## LINDA TIERNEY REPORT

We have enjoyed the last few months within our residential service, St Joseph's House has officially closed as of the 31st of October 2021. With Covid restrictions being lifted it was good to have the return of family and friends visits and to enjoy more outings in the community.

We had a full and eventful celebration week with the launch of the memory book which captured all the history and memories cherished from all the years within St Joseph's House. It was a joy to celebrate mass with the Archbishop of Dublin and have the launch of our service rebrand which is a positive step for us all as we embrace our community service.

We are very proud and grateful of the staff team who worked tremendously through the pandemic which ensured we closed our residential service with no Covid cases amongst our service users this is exceptional and shows the commitment from the whole team to ensure our service users wellbeing and safety.

We enjoyed the BBQ during celebration week as it was an opportunity for all service users and staff who have not seen each other during the pandemic to catch up and share stories of how they are getting on in their new homes.

We said goodbye to a lot of long-term staff and we want to wish them all well in their next chapter and know they will keep in touch due to the many relationships they have over the years.

Geraldine Gallagher our Director of Care also retired as St Joseph's House closed its doors and we want to thank Geraldine for her many years of dedication to all the service users and staff and wish her all the best in her retirement.



Vera & Madga have been our domestic team for over 15 years but also had wonderful relationships with all service users and will be sorely missed by all.

Ali was our chef for many years and like all long terms staff built relationships with service users and we wish him all the best in his new venture.

We want to thank Irina also for all the support she provided in setting people up in their homes in the community and her dedication to their well-being whilst working in the nursing team in the residential.

We are delighted to welcome new members to our team and we wish them all the best in their new roles.

We are delighted that all service users are now transitioned to their new homes and while we still have a lot of support to provide to ensure their new locations becomes a home we are confident in the success with a dedicated team from all departments. This would not have been possible without the commitment from Sharon Murphy our Transition Coordinator, the transition team, Team leaders, nursing and the whole support team. Every staff member has played a role in the success across all departments and we could not have done it without each and everyone one of you.



Reach Deaf Services Senior Management Team have also supported us to transition from a residential to the community and I would like to thank the Facilities Manager Paul Ryder and his team, Declan Corcoran, Gerry Ward, Gerry O'Grady and Tiernan McGrath for all the support in closing the residential and in supporting each person transition to their home.

## SERVICE USER

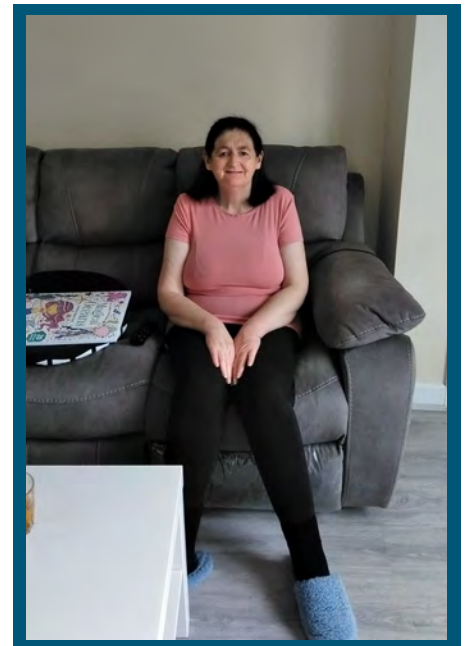
### GERALDINE & SUSAN FEEDBACK ON COMMUNITY LIVING

When we moved in November 2020, we were excited and delighted to move into beautiful and cosy home of our own. The best thing about moving into our home; we can attend different events in Deaf Village Ireland (DVI), local shops and transports so we can go anywhere such as going to Blanchardstown shopping centre which we love to do regularly. We have met new friends and our neighbours are lovely and friendly.

Geraldine: I enjoy baking as I love baking scones and bread. I enjoy go out for walks nearly every day enjoying my home area.

Susan: I enjoy cooking as well as I enjoy making soup and making scones.

Also we enjoy learning new things and making new connections. We are happy with moving into our home from St. Joseph's House as it is THE best thing we ever did.



# HEAD OF BOARDING CARE

Claire Bowe

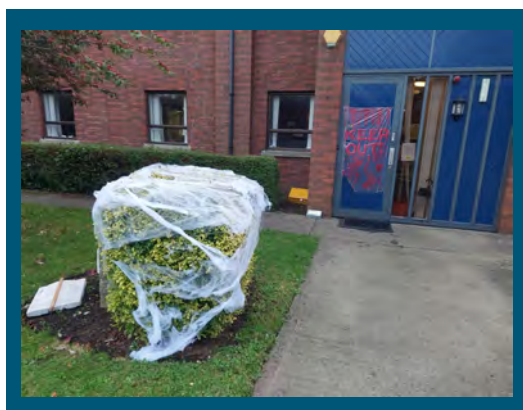


## CLAIRE BOWE REPORT

It has been a really enjoyable time settling into the Head of Care role. I have been learning about the service, deaf culture, the deaf community, and learning ISL. I am looking forward to working in the Boarding Campus in the coming year which will involve making exciting plans to enhance the Boarding experience. I hope you all enjoy reading the updates below regarding our recent activities. Wishing a very special Christmas for you all.

## BOARDING CAMPUS

The Boarding Campus reopened at the end of August to welcome back our boarders and staff. We were delighted to welcome our eight new boarders Liam Davies, Luke Street, Sean Mc Manus, Sean Brady, Totis Lucinavicius, Emma Hamilton, Hannah Sheridan and Eva Smith. We also welcomed Claire Bowe, our new Head of Care, Emily Matassa and Jason Molloy, our new Social Care Workers, to our team. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Aoife Prendergast, PJ Murray and Lisa Moriarty who have left us since the last newsletter for their commitment during their time with us. Lisa Kelly has since taken on a new role of Counsellor.

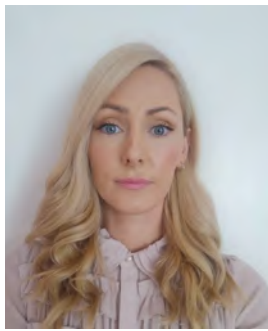


It has been a very busy and exciting term. In September we celebrated International Week of Deaf People and International Day of Sign Languages. In September and October, four of our boarders received their confirmation. We celebrated Reach Deaf Services' 175th anniversary. We enjoyed the Halloween festivities. Both St. Mary's and St. Joseph's displayed beautiful decorations which looked very spooky with various unusual characters and accessories. This year we are delighted that St. Joseph's won the best decorated house as St. Mary's won the best Christmas Decorations last year. St. Mary's put on a fabulous, creative and colourful display. Well done TO everyone involved. Here's what our boarders and staff had to say about the events.

## REDMOND O'SHEA SOCIAL CARE WORKER

St. Mary's and St. Joseph's Boarders celebrated this significant event by participating in various activities. We decided to have a tee-shirt design competition. Boarders were invited to participate in this activity. The aim was to draw or paint a tee-shirt design on the concept of Irish Sign Language, its importance and what it means to them. We received a great response. Boarders were creative and put a lot of thought and effort into designing their tee-shirt. The art work was magnificent and we have great talent in our midst. The goal is to have the winning designs on a printed tee-shirt. Each participant will be presented with their individual design on a tee-shirt. We would like to thank all the boarders who participated and the staff for their assistance and support.





Claire Bowe



Emily Matassa



Jason Molloy

### **EMMA SHAW AND SARA KELLY ACTIVITIES CO-COORDINATORS**

We organised many different activities for the boarders after their summer break. The activities varied from Pizza making to Selfie Scavenger Hunt. It was great to see boarders getting involved in the activities. We also would like to thank staff for their effort and support in organising the activities and making sure the boarders are having fun as well as making memories they will cherish when they leave us. We also have set up a weekly walking club and running club, to help boarders to keep a healthy lifestyle.

St Mary's and St Joseph's Boarding also took part in Halloween Decoration competition, where they fought for the best decorated boarding campus. The winner was St Joseph's boarding campus, where they did fancy dress and a short story-telling when Claire, our Head of Care, came by to see the decorations. St Mary's Boarding Campus did extremely well as well, their decorations was extremely creative but hard luck, guys but maybe you will win the Christmas decorations, get planning now! It is never too early. The boys thoroughly enjoyed their prize- a pizza takeaway! The team also had fun dressing up as clowns.

Our boarders also got a chance to enjoy their Halloween trips. The seniors went to Farmaphobia and had a great time exploring the different haunts! The juniors went to the Wax Museum and really enjoyed taking pictures with their favourite celebrities. They then went to McDonalds as they had worked up quite an appetite! It was great that we had the opportunity to facilitate these outings and it was worth it when we saw how much they enjoyed it.



### **NICOLA CREAN SOCIAL CARE WORKER**

Team Hope's Christmas Shoebox Appeal is an annual campaign that delivers gifts straight into the hands of children affected by poverty. Often these shoebox are the only gift that a child will receive at Christmas and the joy that they bring is incredible. Since 2010, they have delivered over 2.1 million Shoebox gifts to Vulnerable Children across the world. One of our boarders, Finn Lyons is sending in a box this year and we would like to say well done for his work on the box. It would be great to see this initiative taking off within the boarding campus with the hope that more boarders and staff will take part next year.

### **JACKIE O'BRIEN SOCIAL CARE LEADER**

A group of 8 senior boys went to Farmaphobia with two staff and it was brilliant! There were 4 different sections, Zombie land, haunted house, the Corn Fields but the best was the clown tent. We were expecting to be scared and it did not disappoint! The Clown tent was so good, it was a little disorientating with the flashing lights. We all held on to each other and tried to work a way through it.



One boy led the way and got us to the other side. However, another boy got caught between the two clowns but managed to free himself and another boy lost us inside but managed to grab onto Jackie's coat just in time before the clowns grabbed him. The other group of 4 boys enjoyed it so much they wanted a second go in the clown tent! Well worth the visit, we cannot wait for next year, a big thanks to Nicola who organized the trip! The chip van was great and at the end of the event we all had a feed. But watch out for the actors dressed up, as they scare you while you queue for food, when you least expect it! We also got to see DJ spook!

## SERVICE USER

### MY CONFIRMATION DAY

#### Oisín Smith

I had a lovely day for my Confirmation. After, we went to Milano's Restaurant with my Godparents to celebrate. We also visited my grandparents. We then had some Confirmation cake when we got home later that day.

#### Sean McManus

I had my confirmation on the 8th October at 1pm in Deaf Village Ireland. Mam and Dad came to my confirmation and Mam was my sponsor. I picked the name Joseph. It was a happy day for me. Later I went to visit my grandparents and family.

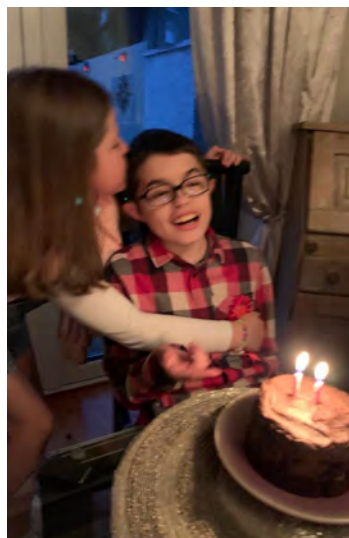


#### Liam Davies

I make my Confirmation on the 25th September 2021 in St. Columbas Catholic Church Cork and my Mam and Dad and two brothers came with me. After we went to Captain Americas Restaurant for food after and my Aunty came with us. We had a lovely day. I chose Frank as my Confirmation name after my grandad.

#### Elvinas Juska

I had my Confirmation last month and it was fun! It was in DVI and my Mam and Dad were there with me. We had a party after, went to McDonalds for food and went shopping. I had a great time.





# DCU EDUCATION

**In 2019, four students began their journey at DCU to become the first Deaf primary school teachers using Irish Sign Language (ISL) in Ireland. Now in the third year of her studies on the Bachelor of Education – Irish Sign Language Pathway, Aimee Ennis McLoughlin, describes her journey so far and how her scholarship supported by Folens and Reach Deaf Services (formerly CIDP) has helped with her studies.**

## AIMEE ENNIS MCLOUGHLIN

“I was born profoundly deaf, and I come from a family of six, five of whom are deaf, including myself, my parents and my two siblings, and one hearing sibling. I went to a mainstream school for primary education and later went to St Mary’s School for the Deaf, now called Holy Family School for the Deaf for secondary school education. I have always wanted to become a teacher from the age of four, as I have always loved school and believed in helping others, particularly Deaf children.

Growing up, I was privileged to have an excellent education which ultimately led to where I am today. It did not come without struggles, especially in primary school. As the only deaf student in a class with 30 other students, I needed extra help. The school provided me with an SNA and resource teacher and I always sat at the front beside the teacher’s table, which was great, but I often felt that I was different because I was the only one who needed an SNA, and needed to sit beside the teacher. I loved going to mainstream school because I had so many opportunities to grow as an individual and explore different things such as learning French, playing the tin whistle, participating in dancing, and a range of sports.

Following in the footsteps of my family, I went to a deaf school for my secondary education. Being in a deaf school allowed me to be myself and to learn through my first language. It was great to have peers who were deaf because we all had the same commonality – deafness. It was great to have teachers who could communicate with us through sign language.



However, there is a big gap in Deaf teachers as there are just simply not enough. This is one of the reasons why I wanted to become a teacher.

Throughout my time in secondary school, I have always wondered if there would be a course where Deaf people could become teachers. Unfortunately, when I left school, there were no primary teaching degrees with an exemption from Irish available and I have never studied Irish. I had begun an Arts degree in Maynooth University when I heard about the Bachelor of Education in ISL and I just knew I had to try to pursue my dream course. Luckily, I got accepted into DCU and it has been the best decision I have ever made. Now that I am in my third year, I’m one step closer to becoming a primary school teacher.



I believe that children from different backgrounds, children with disabilities and children in general, have the right to a good education. I had an excellent education, and I want to give that to my future students.

Having online lectures for a large part of my first two years was a struggle at times, but fortunately, I was able to see some of my peers when we did our second-year placement together in the same school. DCU has always been brilliant in ensuring that we were getting the best education while working remotely. They made every effort to make everything accessible, especially recording the lectures and providing us with lecture notes beforehand.

“There are many good things about the course, but school placement has been my favourite part by far. I had the opportunity to do my school placement in Holy Family School for the Deaf, and I had an excellent experience teaching there. School placement is the most challenging part of the course, but it is so rewarding when the children ask me to repeat the same lessons just because they loved it. The children that I have worked with have made my experience all the more enjoyable. Being on school placement gives me the chance to improve my teaching skills, put the teaching methodologies into practice and grow as a student-teacher.

This summer I have fulfilled another dream of mine by becoming a mother and the scholarship now holds even more significance for me. Now as a parent, I am more determined than ever to help deaf children to receive the education that they deserve.

Now at a time when I need it most, this scholarship will help me financially; it will also help to motivate me to continue the course and establish a promising career that is of utmost importance to me. There are many people to thank for all their support throughout my studies in DCU: Dr Elizabeth Mathews, CIDP, Folens, Senan Dunne, Joe Travers, my sign language interpreters, my lecturers and many more. My scholarship has had a substantial positive impact on my life. The support offered by DCU is exceptional, and I am so glad to be a student here. The University has a considerable emphasis on equality and providing students with access to equal opportunities, and that is one of the things that I admire most about DCU.

*“The scholarship has helped me tremendously in ways that I cannot explain. I will forever be grateful because the scholarship allows me to achieve my lifelong dream of becoming a deaf teacher.”*

After I graduate, I hope to teach in Holy Family School for the Deaf and to eventually become a principal of the school. As I advance in my teaching journey, I look forward to building relationships with my students, expressing my passion for teaching, and having the opportunity to brighten the children’s days. I also look forward to facing more challenges that come with teaching because it will develop and improve my skills and help me grow as a teacher.”

# CHAPLAIN FOR NCDP

Fr Paddy Boyle



## JOHN PATRICK REPORT

In essence, the global pandemics like the one we are experiencing comprise the most stressful and lethal for the Deaf community. The Deaf go through considerable challenges that impact their overall life adversely. By coming through a pandemic creates more complex problems for the Deaf. Therefore, offering appropriate interactions to console them during these trying moments is crucial. Such interactions tend to establish a healthy bond with the Deaf community and their friends and families. It also ensures that the spiritual needs of this group are addressed adequately.

A significant tragedy, sense of futility, and sadness the deaf might encounter relates to life and death issues. However, we are currently resuming normal life slowly and can share this journey following the easing of Coronavirus restrictions. There is also a Mass for the Deaf, and many are now becoming more re-connected or rejoined.

Recently we had a wonderful Mass for 175 years celebration. It was an honor for us to have the Archbishop Dermot Farrell to celebrant this special event of 175 years anniversary Mass along with Fr. Paddy Boyle and Fr. Stephen Monaghan. With sincerest gratitude to all the staff and volunteers assisting some of the congregation during and after the Mass.

We mourn the recent deaths of Eddie Ryan (Tipperary and Dublin) and Teresa Aughey (Cabra, Dublin). We prayed for them, as well as their friends and family, during this difficult time.

We mourn the deaths of individuals among the deaf community. We are praying for them, their families, and their friends as they endure this challenging period. Notably, a Mass for the Deaf (All Souls Mass for the Deaf) will be held in commemoration of all the departed faithful.





Merry  
Christmas  
&  
Happy New Year

from Reach Deaf Services



@REACHDEAF1845

Reach Deaf Services  
Deaf Village Ireland  
Ratoath Road  
Cabra  
Dublin 7

Tel : 01-830 0522

Email: [info@reachdeafservices.ie](mailto:info@reachdeafservices.ie)



Reach Deaf Services

CHY: 1394  
RCN: 2002138

Editor: Alan Smyth  
Email: [alan@reachdeafservices.ie](mailto:alan@reachdeafservices.ie)