



## INTERIM CEO REPORT

### KEITH ADAMS

Greetings to everyone in Reach Deaf Services. Little did I think back in February 2021 that I would be back working in Reach Deaf Services. It is a pleasure and an honour to be back working with a fantastic team of people who deliver such amazing service. Having been in situ for a few weeks now it has been good to catch up on all that is happening and see the progress that has been made under Tara & Mary. The way that the organisation has forged its way through the challenges of the last few years is commendable and down to all the hard work and dedication of each and every one of you, Thank you.

As you might know Tara will be joining me from the 17th April and between us we will endeavour to keep Reach Deaf Services on the path that Mary has set. In doing this we are both here to provide any support that you need and as always our door(s) are open.

I have no doubt I will have a chance to catch up with many of you, both familiar and new over the coming months and look forward to the experience.

Have a happy Easter

# HR GENERALIST REPORT

KRISTINA HARRIS

As we welcome 2023, Reach Deaf Services kicks off the year by resuming our recruitment drive across our Social Care & Support Worker Departments in our Boarding Campus and Community service along with other vacancies such as Transport Escort and Policy Officer. Reach Deaf Services will also be sharing exciting new vacancy opportunities by mid-year.

In Early 2023, Claire Whelan resigned from her post as Head of Care and Acting CEO to take an opportunity in a new role. Annie Egan also retired from her post as HR Administrator, a Lunch was held in Deaf Village Ireland with staff from all services in attendance, and was a wonderful time for all. We wish both Claire and Annie continued success in their future adventures.

The ISL teaching team remains active in their teaching and ISL supports all staff and service users with a current total of 23 staff members in active ISL classes in 2023 so far. The ISL teaching and interpreting teams are also working on creating a new ISL induction structure for new staff which we hope to commence in April 2023. In January, Amanda Mohan was appointed as the ISL lead for Reach Deaf Services interpreting and teaching teams, we wish her all the best in her new role.

Training is in full swing with Reach Deaf Services seeking to train two in-house staff to become Manual Handling Instructors in 2023 which will greatly support the annual training of staff. Community Practice leads and Social Care workers have also commenced the Enhancing Quality for Transition Practitioner Programme which will be due for completion in mid-2023. This year, new HSE training will also be rolled out to all staff regarding the HSE National Consent policy and also training in Assisted Decision making.

In relation to Systems and Technology, Reach Deaf Services will be seeking to implement a new, fully encompassing HR system in 2023 that will meet the current requirements of the HR department and also each of the services management in their support with staff for things such as Annual Performance Development Plans or Supervision. This new system will also include time management for staff work records.

# PROPERTY & MANAGEMENT REPORT

PAUL RYDER

## **Chemical & SafePass Trainings**

The maintenance team completed the Chemical & SafePass training programmes in February 2023. This will ensure the team will have a knowledge of health and safety, and be able to work on-site without being a risk to themselves or others who might be affected by their acts or omissions. Well done to the team!

## **Upgraded LED light fittings**

The works were undertaken replacement of 112 no. of the LED light fittings in St. Joseph's & St. Mary's Boardings. The new LED light bulbs use up to 85% less electricity than old light bulbs and 95% of that energy is converted to light with only 5% wasted as heat. Not only does that energy efficiency save money on our bills, it can boost focus, assist in concentration and relaxation and improve overall mood and behaviour to boarders & staff. Funded by the HSE and the project was completed in February 2023.

## **Water Tank Replacement**

An old fashioned galvanised steel water tank was replaced with a plastic tanks in St. Joseph's Boarding and it was funded by the HSE, which it was completed in February 2023.

# HEAD OF ADULT SERVICES

LINDA TIERNEY



## LINDA TIERNEY REPORT

The latest news we have from the Supported Living Service is we are currently looking at new processes and systems to support staff in their roles to enhance service delivery.

We continue to actively recruit for Social Care Workers and Support staff to fulfil positions. We are focusing on building staff competencies and identifying the necessary skills required to support staff in their role to provide quality support. I have attended an EU base Project aiming to develop a competency framework for the community and non-profit sector. I was able to connect with the City of Dublin Education and Training Board to explore education opportunities for staff which will support their professional development.

We currently have two staff engaged in the Enhanced Quality Training Programme run by the HSE which is focused on improving the quality of life of service users. There will be an update provided from the staff in the next newsletter.

We are continuing to support service user's integration into their new homes and communities. The focus this year will be on the Assisted Decision-Making Act and its implementation. We will be rolling out an implementation plan and all staff and service users will be engaged in the process. We will keep families updated on events so they can access and attend webinars as they wish. Safeguarding service users and promoting their Human Rights remains a top priority and we will continue to ensure service users have access to this information and how to report any concerns. All information in relation to the Assisted Decision-Making Act can be found at <https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/national-office-human-rights-equality-policy/assisted-decision-making-capacity-act/>

We are delighted that the ISL Team have commenced the ISL Catch Up sessions and we look forward to seeing all staff and service users on a monthly basis in DVI.



# HEAD OF BOARDING CARE

## ASHLING & RUTH



We are excited to share what we have been up to since the last newsletter and in this newsletter we will be celebrating our boarders' and staff's achievements. It has been busy few busy months at Boarding and I would like to thank all the staff who have been working hard to make all opportunities below possible.

### ACTIVITIES

The boarders had an opportunity to try badminton. Emily, Joanne, Michelle and Justin, our activities coordinators, worked with Ben O'Looney to organise badminton for every Wednesday evening for a duration of 6 weeks. We had a professional badminton coach, Shane Keogh, who has been involved in numerous competitions over the years, including Deaflympics, coaching our boarders for an hour and a half each week. Shane interacted well with boarders and focused on their individual skillset, he encouraged boarders to step out of their comfort zone. A large number of boarders attended each week and there was great commitment from them. It was a huge success and so enjoyable for all involved. Thank you for your involvement, Shane! We had a social trip for the boarders from St. Mary's and St. Joseph's to Blanchardstown to do bowling and it was a fun-filled evening and thoroughly enjoyed by all.

### LIFE SKILLS AND WORKSHOPS

Life Skills Programme commences at the outset of the young person's journey in Boarding. The Programme is designed to give the young person the skills to live independently and excel in their lives. Life skills through the assigned key worker, assisted and supported by the staff team and parents are taught in a variety of ways in this programme. The young person develops the skills through key working sessions, workshops, recreational activities and real life situations. The skills promote self-sufficiency and are useful in navigating the challenges they face throughout their lives. Life skills include, self-care, health and well-being, money management, independent travel training, daily living skills and various workshops that have taken place recently. Boarders attended workshops on Advocacy and Confidence. The workshop on Advocacy was presented by the IDS and John Charles presented a workshop on Confidence. These workshops were informative in supporting the boarders to say what they want, protect their rights, stand for their interests and have access to the services they need. IDS' advocacy service promotes social inclusion, equality and social justice.



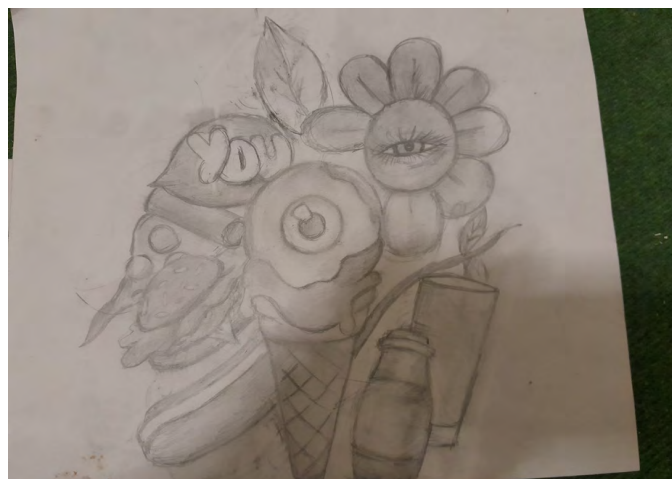
In February, our past boarder John Charles Connolly came to St. Mary's Boarding school. He was invited to deliver a motivational talk on confidence and his experience working as a Manager of Visual Merchandising in Dunnes Stores. We wanted the boarders to see that having confidence can go a long way. John Charles highlighted how important it was to feel confident especially when working in a hearing environment. The reason we had this workshop was because feeling confident leads to better decision-making, positive self-image, better social interactions and improved communication which is what John Charles proved as confidence has allowed him to express himself clearly and assertively. John Charles also explained to the boarders that being confident has increased his motivation and pushed him to pursue his goals and take on new challenges, as he believes in his ability to succeed and wants the boarders to believe in themselves too.

Having John Charles come to boarding was important for Deaf representation. Seeing successful and accomplished Deaf individuals can help to inspire confidence and pride in their own Deaf identity. We have a few boarders leaving this year and some boarders organising their work experience placements. John Charles inspired our boarders with new ideas in a variety of fields, including those that may traditionally be seen as inaccessible to Deaf individuals. Overall, it was amazing to have such a positive example of Deaf success and we thank John Charles for giving up his time and chatting with our boarders to encourage them to achieve their dreams.

Redmond delivered a workshop on the 112 Emergency Text Service to inform the boarders of the importance of registering for 112 Emergency Text Service. This is an essential life skill to have in the event of an emergency for example, Fire, Ambulance, Gardai and The Irish Coastguard. It was demonstrated how to register your phone for the 112 Emergency Text Service. All our boarders are in the process of registering their phones.

While out on a regular walk in St. Anne's Park, Dave encountered a group of herbalists working in the Physics garden adjacent to the Chinese garden. The fragrance and the blooms of the herbs that they were working with were breathtaking. Dave engaged them in conversation and the herbalists explained that you did not need a huge area or rich soil to grow herbs and once they were established they required low maintenance. One herbalist highlighted that not only were herbs used for culinary and medicinal purposes but they had a role to play in promoting the wellbeing of the declining bee population. Bees are a major pollinator and vital to the survival of a range of trees and plants. After putting a small donation in the donation pond, Dave was given a pineapple sage plant and a chamomile plant. The seed was sown (pun intended!). Dave and a number of boarders have decided to plant some herbs in the courtyard garden of the Boarding in a raised bedding area. We have purchased lemon balm, thyme, mint, rosemary to join the pineapple sage and chamomile in pots, waiting to be planted, but not all plants survived the recent bad weather. However, chives, parsley, basil and others will join the display in due course. Over time we could even use the herbs in cooking in the Boarding. The sensory experience and the promotion of ownership of the project can only benefit the boarders. We will keep you posted!

All boarders enjoyed a Pizza night in St. Joseph's where they learnt how to make Pizza dough and had a variety of choice when it came to toppings. This was a successful night, as it taught boarders new cooking skills, while they got to enjoy the end result. Nothing like a homemade Pizza and another recipe to add to their list of skills.



## CELEBRATIONS

International women's day was celebrated on the 8th of March. This year, to mark the occasion the staff in St. Mary's wore something purple for the day. Also, staff received a small gift which contained sweets, candles, face mask and a personalized card. This was a lovely touch. The main kitchen was decorated with a 'Feminist Show' display wall, it showed the names of different shows and movies about strong women. After dinner the boarders and staff took part in a fun game of Women's Day Bingo. Bingo consisted of words of empowerment to describe women such as independent, equality and confidence. It also involved the names of some famous role models such as Malala, Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Michelle Obama. There were lots of prizes up for grabs!

Between each round of bingo there was another chance to win a prize, all you had to do was answer a question related to International Women's Day. We also had an opportunity to learn about well-known women from the deaf community like Melissa 'Echo' Greenlee who is the founder and CEO of deaffriendly.com. Another famous woman mentioned was Marlee Matlin, she is an American actress and activist who was the first deaf performer to win an Academy award for best actress. This was empowering and very inspiring for all of us. The day was a great success, and everyone seemed to enjoy it. The boarders also created a video why being a woman is great and you can see the video on our twitter account.



We also had a Valentines party with loads of games such as Mr and Mrs, drawing whispers game, opening the box (the box had duct tape wrapped with a small surprise present inside but you had to open it with oven mitts). That was where everything got so intense and everyone got very competitive! There was a game that everyone took part in, boarders versus staff...yes, staff! It was a physical game where we all lined up in two rows. The person in the front had to pass on a balloon over their head to the next person behind them, then that person had to pass the balloon through their legs! It went on until the last person at the back of the line received it. The person who received the balloon first before the other team won. It was very competitive and nobody could agree on who won the game. Everyone had great fun that night.



## **ACHIEVEMENTS**

Our youngest boarder Totis was so proud when he received a student award in school. Keep up the good work Totis!

A number of boarders took part in work experience placements recently. This gave them the opportunity to link academic study and theory to real life experiences. It also helped them build a network of future career contacts and possible future employment. Thank you to all the key workers and parents for their support in making this happen for them.

Some students carried out their placement in the Coffee shop in the DVI, thank you to the Community staff for making this possible for them. Another student who is currently completing work placement in a coffee shop on the campus of a college, his key worker linked in with him to see how he is getting on and it is great to know that it is going well.

Another student just finished his work placement with Reach Deaf Services' Maintenance Team. Thank you to, Paul Ryder, our Property and Facilities manager, for making this possible and to the maintenance team. You made him feel so included and part of the team, he loved his work trousers that you provided for him and he expressed he felt very much part of the team. One student carried out their work experience in the Irish Deaf Society office working on the computer, doing graphics designs, slides and excel. He worked in the charity shop on Tuesday and Friday. He informed staff he really enjoyed his time with the IDS.

It is always great to experience a period of "hands-on" learning where you can develop skills such as, team-work, experience the atmosphere and pace of industrial practice and learn new skills that will help with self-development.

A big congratulations to Madars and Luize for passing their driver theory test. Well done and your hard work paid off! Next stop driving lessons, that will be starting soon, keep going and you will be driving before you know it.

A shout out to Sean, our final year student, who continues to amaze us with his portfolio of drawings. Sean is a gifted artist and hopes to pursue a course in art and design. Well Done Sean.

## **STAFF AND UPDATES**

The Working Things out Programme was delivered to TY students over the course of eight weeks, in the Holy Family school by three trained facilitators, Niall Ivory, Deirdre Cunningham and Jackie O'Brien. This was introduced to TY students as a preventative mental health programme to promote positive coping strategies. The students covered how to improve relationships with friends and family, how to develop helpful thinking strategies, how to reduce stress, how to deal with anger and conflict, how to manage feeling down, they learnt practical Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) strategies and they learnt how to understand the key to solving problems. Many thanks to the TY Students for their full participation in this programme, as this is what made it successful, and we hope that they will implement these new strategies into their everyday life, so it will make a difference to them.

Thank you to the staff, interpreters and to Eimear O'Rourke the school Principal for all their support with this and we look forward to hopefully rolling this programme out again next year.

We said good bye to Jason and Joanne, our Social Care Workers, Clodagh, our St. Mary's Chef and Claire, our Head of Care. We would like to wish them all the best for their new career endeavours and adventures.

Seeta, Niall, Louise, Charlene, Jackie and Ruth attended 'Train the Trainer' course and completed assignments for the course. We are currently preparing for our annual training in June and we will be completing different training such as a refresher in Therapeutic Crisis Intervention. We are also organising workshops on Social Role Valorisation for our staff, this is an approach that's used by the Supported Living Services, and this is part of our Business Plan for Boarding.

We are looking forward to mark more important occasions such as gradation and supporting our boarders they study for their exams in summer term. We will be hosting our annual family fun day.

# CHAPLAIN FOR NCDP

FR PADDY BOYLE



## REPORT BY FRANKIE BERRY

We continue to provide Pastoral supports to deaf individuals within the Community. Depending on where you live and for anyone who's in need of advocacy /spiritual support / ISL Interpreting for Funerals/ sacramental events,

Dublin & Outreach

Frankie Berry M: 0871004829 E: frankie@reachdeafservices.ie

Munster:

John Patrick Doherty M: 0879062947. E: johnpatrick@reachdeafservices.ie

Ulster:

Denise FlackM: 0044 7428178932 E: denise@reachdeafservices.ie

## Upcoming Events

There are young children from the Holy Family school for Deaf Children preparing for their 1st Confession in a few weeks' time (April) in Emmaus Chapel as part of getting ready to receive their 1st Communion. To date, they have been learning the meaning of growing in Faith and to build a new friendship with Jesus into their lives. Their 1st Communion date will take place in Emmaus Chapel on the 16th June 2023

There's no Confirmation Class happening this year.

## Pilgrimage to Lourdes 2023

Dublin Diocese Volunteer helper's badge

The Dublin Archdiocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes takes place from the 7th to 12th September 2023, led by Most Rev. Dermot Farrell, Archbishop of Dublin. We look forward to having Pilgrims to join us after a few years absent due to pandemic COVID which impacted many countries.

We look forward to having Volunteers to come as helpers. Many Volunteers came away from the pilgrimage have said that they have made new friends and the experience of being there was truly worthwhile.

There are 100 places available for those who need to avail of the Acceuilli. Please do let Fr Paddy Boyle know. Prior medical assessment is required before confirmation of a place can be allocated.

Guests and helpers stay in Solitude Hotel, close to the Grotto, costs €859 per person sharing. Full board. €150 extra for single room. As always, there will be ISL interpreters present. Bookings can be made directly to JWT Email: info@joewalshtours.ie

For further information please do contact Fr Paddy 086 101 1415.



**The Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes takes place from the 7th to 12th September 2023, led by Most Rev. Dermot Farrell, Archbishop of Dublin.**



***CAN YOU offer your time as a Volunteer?***

***Many Volunteers came away from the pilgrimage have said that they have made new friends and the experience of being there was truly worthwhile***



**There are places available for those who need to avail of the Acceuilli.**

**Solitude Hotel: €859 per person sharing. (Full board.)**

**€150 extra for single room.**

**List of hotels & prices varies - see website for details**

**Bookings: Email: [info@joewalshstours.ie](mailto:info@joewalshstours.ie)**



**For further information**

**contact Fr Paddy M: 086 101 1415.**

**Frankie M: 087100 4829**

**John Patrick M: 087 906 2947**



## HOLY WEEK / EASTER WEEK 2023

### **Palm Sunday**

Sat 1st April 4pm Emmaus Chapel, DVI



Sun 2nd April 11.30am St Joseph the Artisan, Bonnybrook



6th April, Thurs: 10.30am in Pro Cathedral, Dublin (bookings required)

6th April Thurs: 10am in Cathedral of St Anne & St Mary's, Cork

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### **Holy Thursday**

Jesus celebrates the 'new Passover' with his disciples



6th April 4pm *Communal confession & Mass*  
Emmaus Chapel,

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### **Good Friday**

We remember Jesus sacrifice for us on the cross

Friday 7th April 3pm Bonnybrook

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### **Easter Sunday Jesus has Risen**

8th April

**Sat Vigil 4pm** Emmaus Chapel,

9th April

**Sunday 11.30am** Bonnybrook

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**Online Services: [www.churchservices.tv/DVI](http://www.churchservices.tv/DVI)  
[www.bonnybrookparish.ie](http://www.bonnybrookparish.ie)**

**ISL Interpreter will be present at all of above events**

## FAMILY IN NEED 2022

Adjusting to living with post COVID which did hit us hard when it came finding ways of getting donations for Family in Need in 2022. To get this started, a very kind volunteer made a difference by offering of her time in organising car boot sale and selling tickets which amounted to €1,019.30

A huge gratitude to the ladies knitting group selling hats which amounted to around the €550 mark.

Not forgetting those who gave their donations and had raffle prizes for the winners.

We made € 2,7985 in total.

We converted these monies into vouchers, which varied from €20 - €50, by post to those families in need, connected to the Holy Family school, and also to different individuals from different parts of Ireland via Chime.

10 Food hampers were delivered to those living in different parts of Dublin.

There were mixture of hampers as gifts raffle prizes for those who participated at the Bingo after their Deaf Christmas Day dinner in Deaf Village.

In total we supported 45 people.

In all, I am so thankful for your thoughtfulness and your acts of kindness to make this possible. This certainly made a difference to those who received either a Voucher / hamper / winning prize which made their day to remember. Thanks to all for your continued interest in making this happen.

With much gratitude

Frankie Berry

***Co-ordinator Deaf Persons/Families in need.***



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