



INTERIM CEO REPORT

TARA MC BREEN & KEITH ADAMS

It is hard to think that this is our 14th edition of the newsletter running over the last five years. We hope that this continues to be informative for you as a reader and we are always delighted to take any feedback as to how we can improve the newsletter.

As we head into the summer months it is interesting to look back on events and we could not overlook the fantastic achievement of the TY students in Holy Family School on their success in winning the Gold medal Young Social Innovator of the year award. The board and team on Reach Deaf Services were so impressed with this achievement. So much so that the students have been invited to demonstrate to the board their innovation.

We wish those students and staff who are leaving us this year all the very best in their future endeavours and hopefully you will not be strangers to us in the future.

We wish you all the very best for the summer and hope that you all enjoy some quality time with family and friends.

HR GENERALIST REPORT

KRISTINA HARRIS

As we reach the half-way mark for 2023, Reach Deaf Services have maintained a robust recruitment drive across our Social Care and Support worker Departments in our boarding Campus and Community Services. Our current vacancies also include Clinical Nurse Manager for Boarding services and recently for our Community Service, we advertised a vacancy for a Think Ahead Planning Coordinator which is now closed for application processing. In the past number of weeks, we have successfully closed 2 vacancies in Policy Officer and Fixed-Term Community Support Manager.

There was a series of new training introduced across our services so far this year which included a new revised community-based emergency first aid training for our Community Service staff. In online training, we introduced the HSE National Consent policy training and Fundamentals of GDPR training to all staff and new staff as part of their induction. Reach Deaf Services has maintained its wider mandatory training schedule in areas such as Manual Handling and Medication Management. Later in 2023, Reach Deaf Services will move forward with plans to train 2 in-house staff to become Manual Handling Instructors which will greatly support the annual training of staff across our services.

The ISL teaching team continue to host a monthly ISL catch up day for all staff and Services users to attend which has become a great opportunity for all to get together and catch up, using and practicing their ISL skills. Currently, the ISL teaching team are providing 1 to 1 ISL classes to a total of 17 staff and they also facilitate a group ISL session in Boarding Services for staff to attend.



In Early 2023, Reach Deaf Services attended a number of IT system demonstrations with a committee panel in order to seek the best IT/HR System for our services. As we reach the mid-year mark, we continue to seek out new options and alternatives to ensure that the best fit for purpose system is chosen and our IT team continue on such search.

HEAD OF ADULT SERVICES

LINDA TIERNEY



OUR TRIP TO WESTPORT - BY GERALDINE NEYLON AND SUSAN SHERIDAN

We went to Westport with the Day Centre group from 12th to 16th June, 5 days and 4 nights.

The activities we did;

Tuesday; Visit Foxford Woolen Mills; they do weaving, and they showed us the big machine that does the weaving. This machine has been running for the last 40 years. Then we went to see Michael Davitt museum which was very interesting.

Wednesday; We went to park by Westport House to see the ducks and we got into boat which was lovely. It was relaxing day.

Thursday; We went to a beach by Achill Island and we were lucky with weather as it was warm and sunny.

Geraldine: "The weather was unpredictable so had to bring everything to make sure we were covered for all types of weather. We managed to get some sun throughout our trip but when the weather wasn't good, we kept busy with indoor activities."

Susan: "We had many different activities with the group every evening such as bingo, board games and many more. I really enjoy one game called charades."



EQT COURSE

I have found the EQT course to be a very worthwhile experience and it has changed the way in which I view the service users and interact with them. The EQT course has highlighted the differences in the ways we view people who have come from a service and very much focuses on SRV techniques and the devalued roles that individuals in a service may experience.

Through challenging us to think outside the box, we constructed a vision of the most valued roles we could think of for each individual and built a pathway to achieving these valued roles. The course involved an assignment of partnering with a learning partner and creating a vision for their life that involves more socially valued roles to integrate them as valued members of the community so that others will see them in the best possible way. Through completing this assignment and presenting it to the group, I learned to change my perception of the people that I work with and to work on, as much as possible, a vision for all the people that we work with to live as normal and valued of a life as possible.

HEAD OF BOARDING CARE

ASHLING DONEGAN & RUTH KELLY



TY STUDENTS WINNERS OF THE GOLD TITLE OF YOUNG SOCIAL INNOVATORS OF THE YEAR AWARD

We would like to congratulate the Transition Year students from Holy Family School for Deaf on their prestigious win at this year's Young Social Innovators awards. It is a high impact social innovation project by the students. Their project, Deaf Awareness- a language for all, won the overall award for the Make Our World a Better Place for Young People category, which was presented by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. The project involved the students teaching their hearing peers how to sign. They delivered classes in Sign language to Transition Year students and developed a 10- week curriculum and video resources.

Young Social Innovators is a non-profit organization that empowers young people to use their talents, insights, passion and creativity to come up with the innovative solutions to social challenges.

Following their win, two students, Shane Hamilton and Ellie Woods appeared on TV3 to explain more about their project. The project aimed to develop a module for Transition Year Students to learn some Irish Sign Language and develop greater awareness of how to communicate with Deaf and Hard of Hearing people. Shane and Ellie also explained about the 'Elephant Game', which we think is going to become hugely popular with young people around the country. Well done to all the TY students and their teachers in Holy Family School.



STAFF UPDATES

We had a lovely party in St. Mary's recently to celebrate and say a big thank you to Geraldine O'Connor, Sinead Crean, Michelle McLoughlin, Emily Mattias & Chigo for all their work in Boarding.

Geraldine worked with both boarder's campus for many years. She spent the last two years in St Mary's. Ger was lovely to work with. she was gentle, patient and wonderful listener. Sinead worked with us in St Mary's for a few years. She was a young lady with lots of creative and fun ideas. Sinead is gone travelling to Australia to seek a new adventure and experience all Australia has to offer. We wish you all the best and safe travels Sinead.

Chigo worked within the Mary's campus. . He was a lovely, very nice person & good worker. Chigo had great relationships with staff and will be missed by all . Best wishes to him for the future. Michelle worked for five years in St. Joseph's. She had a great working relationship with the boarders and she was a committed team member. Michelle always brought a positive energy to work and was very passionate in her role. Emily worked with us for two years and she was very committed to her work. We thank them for their dedication, commitment and service. They will be sadly missed by all of us. We wish them well for the future.

We would like to welcome on board our new members of staff, Oriane O'Dea, Robert Mc Ara Mwada Mwale and Ray Whelan. Oriane and Robert are based in St. Joseph's Boarding Campus and Mwadi is based in St. Mary's. Ray has taken on the role as the new Chef in Mary's boarding We wish them every success in their new roles.

A big welcome back to Breda Whelan Mooney who returned to us in May after 3 years away Emma Shaw will return in September after a one year career break.

GRADUATIONS

Congratulations to all our boarders, 3rd years, TY students and final year students who graduated recently. The ceremonies were held in the Holy Family School. The boarders demonstrated their hard work, effort and resilience with their studies and projects. Well done to Shane Hamilton who won the 'Student of the Year Award'. All students should be quite proud of themselves for their hard work and dedication to their studies.



FINAL YEAR GRADUATION PARTY

The Graduation Party was fantastic.

It included a lovely slideshow of the final year boarders from when they were younger to now. It showed not only how much they have grown but more importantly what lovely young people they have become. It is also important to recognize the talents of Tina who designed the placement cards and say thank you.

FINAL YEAR BOARDERS

Our Final year boarders this year are Sean Olandele, Finn Lynch, Kate Quinlan, Emma Molloy, Emma Barrett & Rachel Mc Cabe. Sean has secured a place in Ballyfermot College to pursue a course in Illustration Techniques and Practices. Sean is a very talented artist and we believe he will have a great future in art and design. Finn is pursuing a National Learning course. He is a great rugby player and a wonderful storyteller. Kate wants to do woodwork in offlay college. She is actually going to college in June for an introduction but hopefully will be starting full time in September. Emma M is waiting for confirmation that she has a spot in prosper Fingal. Emma went in for 3 days observation and to see if she liked it – so far she does, she has already made some new friends her own age , we wish you every success Emma. Emma B has secured a two years photography course in Cork College. Rachel is going to college in Cavan. Kate Quinlan was our first St. Marys boarder to reside in the Independent House and informed us she thoroughly enjoyed her experience. She feels she has benefited greatly and feels her confidence has grown from her time in the house. All boarders will be greatly missed by all the staff and boarders. As they were all great role models to our younger boarders. We wish them every success and happiness in their future.



BREDA - STAFF TESTIMONIAL

I am back after 3 years Career's Break while I cared for my mother. It was wonderful to spend quality time with her and I will always be thankful that I had the opportunity to do it. When I arrived back to boarding in May I couldn't believe how grown up all the boarders had become. it was great to see everyone keeping well and happy. I look forward to working with everyone in September.

ACTIVITIES

Boarders were actively involved and enjoyed various sporting activities on campus. This year, swimming, badminton, football and boxing were the main sports that boarders participated in on a weekly basis. In this country we have great role models in Katie Taylor and Katie Harrington and in the UK Anthony Joshua. Some of our boarders have commenced training in boxing and are enjoying learning these new skills. Their instructor is Sean Young. A past pupil(Holy Family School for the Deaf). He works with SPY Fitness LTD who oversees the training.

The Boarders had a variety of outings throughout the year which included Go Kart Racing, Ice-skating, Sea Bray Aquarium and Bowling, Walking/Beach in Bray & Howth and Café in Phoenix Park. They thoroughly enjoyed these outings which were filled with great memories and laughter.



ST. JOSEPHS HERB GARDEN - DAVE O`BRIEN

Over the last few months, during Spring and early Summer we were delighted to see the herb garden develop and establish itself. With some sensitive maintenance and hopeful propagating, we saw new shoots of Lemon Balm, Mint, Pineapple Sage, Chamomile and Chives appear and the various Lavenders enter full bloom, displaying an array of purple.

The boarders took great interest and pride in taking cuttings putting them in water and seeing the roots develop on the Pineapple Sage and Lemon Balm. New shoots that appeared adjacent to the mother plants were welcomed with a degree of wonderment by the boarders following the recent periods of sunshine and spells of rain. Just before the summer break cuttings were planted with roots that we propagated and with some luck these should flourish over the summer months.

The Herb patch project run by the Irish Register of Herbalists has been contacted with a view to join the Herb Patch Project. This is an initiative that sees the Irish Register of Herbalists help primary schools establish Sensory Herb Gardens allowing children to plant, learn and have fun.

We will keep you posted on developments.



CHAPLAIN FOR NCDP

FR PADDY BOYLE



REPORT BY FRANKIE BERRY

We continue to provide Pastoral support 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

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HOLY FAMILY SCHOOL - GRADUATION SERVICES

HFS School leavers of 2023, had their families, teachers and friends in attendance at the Graduation service that took place on the 25th May in Emmaus Chapel. Fr Paddy gave a lovely service. Other Classes from the Holy Family School were able to watch this online via webcam. The theme was **'The World is your Canvas'** which they now can venture their new phase of their journey in life. Each of them have completed their formal education and some will be doing their state exams taking place in June and we hope they will give their best throughout their Leaving Cert/ Leaving Cert Applied examinations.

HOLY FAMILY SCHOOL - 1ST COMMUNION MASS

1st Communion mass for the eight new candidates, from Holy Family School, took place in Emmaus Chapel on the 16th June 2023. Their parents/ grandparents and siblings were there to witness their big moment. They had their 1st Confession before Easter and this is a continuation of their faith journey, But, the difference this time is each child will begin their friendship with Jesus as they get to know more about Jesus as a friend, someone who cares for them in a special way. Congratulations to each one of them and do hope they had an enjoyable day with their families relatives and friends.

Munster

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MIDWEST DEAF SCHOOL - 1ST COMMUNION MASS

Message from John Patrick

'I would like to extend my warmest congratulations to Deaf School in Limerick for their successful completion of their First Holy Communion last month. It is a great achievement for the students, teachers and parents alike. Additionally, I would like to wish all the Deaf pupils the very best of luck as they embark upon new and exciting ventures outside of Limerick School for the Deaf.'

Finally, I would like to extend my congratulations to Deaf students in both Deaf schools and mainstreams who have recently achieved their First Holy communion and Confirmation.

Wishing all the students the best of luck in their future endeavors.'



@Holy Family School Twitter

DUBLIN DIOCESE ANNUAL PILGRIMAGE TO KNOCK

The Dublin Diocese Annual Pilgrimage to Knock took place last April with a great turnout of Deaf People in attendance. A 33 seater bus was available at short notice thankfully, due to no places available from Cabra West Parish. The whole day was an enjoyed by the pilgrims and many had a chance to pray, reflect and finished with 3pm Mass in the basilica. With huge number in attendance from many parishes from Dublin, Fr Gerard Tyrrell was there from Greystones Parish, and he offered his time to interp during the mass. Deaf Pilgrims had little time to meet up with their friends from other parts of Ireland, whom they haven't seen in a while socially before making their return to Dublin.



NCDP ANNUAL PILGRIMAGE TO KNOCK

The NCDP Annual Pilgrimage to Knock gathering from all parts of Ireland will be on Sat 26th August. This gives pilgrim a chance to reflect, slow down and give thanks for all that has been with gratitude. ISL Interpreter will be present throughout the weekend.

THANK YOU FRJOE JONES

COVID Pandemic took us all by a surprise in more ways than one and in March 2020 & it lasted for 3 years.

On Sundays, in an empty Church, viewers had to adapt to using Webcam which meant access was made easier for the hearing population. We thank you Fr Joe for making it possible to avail of ISL Interpreters who faithfully came each Sunday so ALL can participate fully. 2nd camera was installed as it was essential for ISL viewers so they could see better to participate spiritually fully of the Sunday Mass.

Fr Joe we thank you for your thoughtfulness, your kindness. You have shown us how many Deaf & hearing Viewers from different parts of Ireland, thoroughly felt nourished by your doing the Eucharist each Sunday in Sign Language.



In your next move, we wish you the very best and may God grant you the grace and love as you continue in your priestly faithful Ministry.

With sincere

Thanks,

Fr Paddy & Frankie



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