



CEO REPORT

MARY STRINGER

Welcome to our first newsletter of 2026. We are delighted to share updates on the important developments, achievements, and ongoing work across Reach Deaf Services as we begin another year together.

We began the year by welcoming two new board members – Lisa Hennessy and Chris O'Brien. Together, they bring valuable experience in risk and finance, which will greatly strengthen the board. With their appointment, we are now at full capacity at board level, placing us in a very strong position for the year ahead.

At the end of 2025, Pat Clavin stepped down from the board. Pat's departure was a significant loss, and we sincerely thank him for his commitment and contribution to Reach Deaf Services throughout his term.

Over the last number of years, we have maintained a strong organisational focus on compliance, and this remains central to our work in 2026.

Some key actions completed since the start of the year include:

GDPR

We have updated our Privacy Statement, which is now available on our website. Over the summer, we will continue work on GDPR-related areas to ensure the information is accessible and easily understood by the people we support. Our aim is to ensure everyone is fully aware of their data protection rights.

Safeguarding

To further strengthen our safeguarding culture, we delivered Designated Liaison Person (DLP) training in February. Managers from each department, including SLS and our chaplaincy team, participated. This training broadens safeguarding knowledge across the organisation and supports our commitment to best practice.

Systems Implementation

To enhance our compliance infrastructure, we are implementing Board, a system designed to bring policies, risk management, and compliance processes together in one central location. This will support more efficient and transparent governance.

Looking Ahead to 2026

In 2026, we will be opening the Supported Living Service (SLS) for admissions. We are currently liaising with the relevant authorities and look forward to expanding this vital service.

Our ISL Team began this year's ISL catch-ups in February, with the first session proving a great success. These initiatives continue to reinforce Irish Sign Language as the primary language of the organisation.

Thank You

We remain grateful to all our teams and to the children, young people and adults we support, and their families for their ongoing trust and support.

Finally, I would like to wish you all a Happy Easter.

HR REPORT

JUSTINAH BELLO & KRISTINA HARRIS

HR Message

As we approach the end of 1st Quarter 2026, the HR Department would like to thank every staff member of Reach Deaf Services for your hard work so far. The first few months of the year have been busy, and we appreciate your continued support and commitment each day.

Quarter 1 Highlights

HR has continued to stay active in recruitment, working on both new and existing job vacancies across the organisation.

Some of the vacancies processed this quarter included Support and Social Care Workers, Accounts Assistant, Community Support Manager, Operations Assistant amongst others.

As we approach the end of the quarter, the remaining vacancies are either at the interview stage or in the onboarding process.

We successfully recruited a Community Support Manager for the Community Service, who started in early January 2026. We also welcomed new relief staff who joined the Supported Living Services in February. In total, 2 positions have been filled so far this year. Once again, we would like to take this opportunity to welcome all our new joiners to the team!

The HR Department remains committed to improving, standardising and strengthening our processes and procedures to ensure compliance. This year, we have made good progress in key areas, including:

- Developing an enhanced Employee Relations framework for managers
- Creating and sharing an employee performance guide for all staff
- Updating the Employee Induction pack and processes to better support new recruits
- Commencing the Performance Development Plan cycle for the year
- Launched the revised Performance Improvement Plan process
- Progressing the probationary process and related documents
- Updating the Employee Handbook amongst others

A number of policies and processes are currently under review to improve best practice and provide more clarity. These include the Sick Leave Policy, Chaplaincy Code of Conduct, Staff Grievance/Complaints Policy, and Employee Assistance Programme procedure.

HR is also developing standard operating procedures (SOPs) across the full employee lifecycle, from recruitment to offboarding including employee relations. This work is ongoing.

We have also been preparing for the full rollout of One Touch Health system. This system will help manage staff training and training records, as well as maintain all employee HR files. Once in place, it will make training scheduling and compliance much easier and give managers better oversight of training and related HR information.

Reach Deaf Services is also seeking to appoint a dedicated Project Manager to oversee this rollout and ensure a smooth implementation of the new system.

Looking Ahead: - Quarter 2 Focus

In the next quarter, HR will focus on:

- Staff development and ensure the PDP process is carried out effectively
- Strengthening staff wellbeing and engagement
- Ensure trainings are delivered effectively and compliance is maintained
- Supporting managers with related HR tools and guidance
- Continued to ensure HR communication is clear and easy to understand for all staff
- Promoting a workplace culture grounded in respect, inclusion, and continuous improvement.

We understand that working in Deaf services comes with unique challenges, including communication needs, cultural awareness, safeguarding, advocacy, and frontline care. We encourage all staff to continue promoting a positive workplace culture and strong advocacy in the work we do.

On this note, we would like to thank you once again for your dedication and teamwork. This makes a real difference every day across our services.

We truly appreciate the Cando spirit, passion, and strong commitment shown by each of you. From HR Desk, we wish you and your families a Happy Easter and let's continue to work together for a successful year.

Final Note

The HR team is here to support you. If you have any questions or need help, please feel free to contact us.

Christmas time in boarding - Caoimhe

This year, our students enjoyed a fun-filled trip to Twinkle Town in Smithfield. They had a great time ice skating, going on the slides and merry-go-rounds, and wandering through the food markets to check out all the Christmas treats on offer.

There were a few slips and falls along the way, from both students and staff but thankfully no one was hurt, and it just added to the laughter. It was a really enjoyable day and one that everyone will be smiling about for a while.

Bowling - Ros

Our recent trip with the junior boarders to Leisureplex in Blanchardstown was a great opportunity to combine some friendly competition and fun. We spent the time laughing, encouraging the young people and they in turn encouraged and helped each other and celebrated when someone got a strike.

When the bowling was finished, they enjoyed playing shooting games/claw machines in the arcade. Some even won small prizes. On the way back to boarding, they talked excitedly about the next trip to Leisureplex, what a lovely way to escape from the daily routine.

Living well together - Emilia Andrioiaia

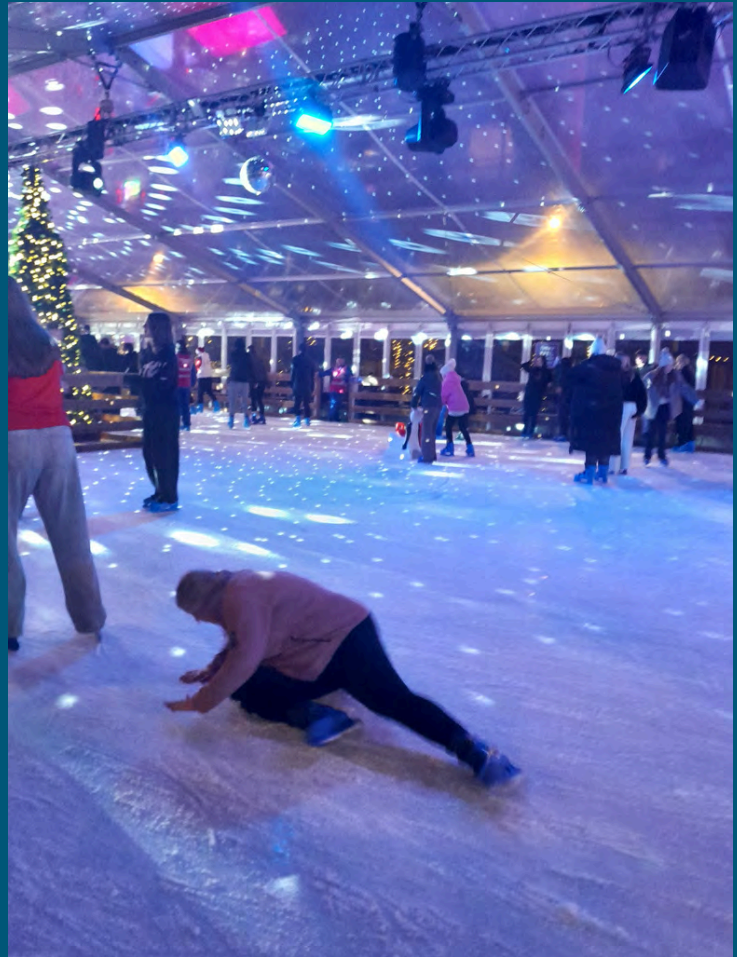
On Thursday the 26th of Feb, we celebrated living well together. We displayed the winning poster from the living well together art competition, and all the boarders and staff did their handprints as a way of showing they are all part of the living well together agreement. These handprints were displayed beautifully by each boarder and staff alongside the HEART poster and the Living Well Together Agreement displayed. After this the young people explained what living well together means to them and we celebrated its launch with a wonderful pizza party.

Santa Claus - Yahye

It was a wonderful experience being Santa at the Christmas party, especially as it was my first time taking on this role. I truly enjoyed seeing the excitement and smiles on everyone faces, which made the experience very special for me. I am very grateful for the for the opportunity and I truly enjoyed being Santa.

Milena Rytelewska - new member of the boarding team

I started working in the St Marry's boarding in December 2025. It was a big challenge. And it is challenge, still. But I love it. Learning, discovering. Every day. The biggest challenge was and still is ISL, as I have never learned it before. Speaking, understanding... On language level and beyond words. But it is also very interesting and very, very rewarding. And, simply, joyful. I also see my job in the Reach Deaf Services as very meaningful, promoting values I deeply believe in, such as supporting others and equalizing opportunities. That motivates me, a lot. The staff is lovely. Food is great. I am happy to get a chance to work here.



SUPPORT LIVING SERVICES

LINDA TIERNEY - HEAD OF SERVICES



Support Living Services Manager - Sharon Murphy

A Brilliant Christmas & New Year in our Supported Living Service

The people we support had a wonderful time celebrating Christmas and ringing in the New Year with their families and friends. It was lovely to see so many meaningful moments—quiet visits at home, big family dinners, community events and everything in between.

A huge thank you to our staff team, who worked across the Christmas period to make sure everyone had the support they needed to enjoy the season in their own way. From helping with travel plans, decorating homes, preparing meals, supporting communication, and encouraging people's own traditions, your work made a real difference.

Welcome to Our New Community Support Manager

We're delighted to welcome Gemma Dempsey, our new Community Support Manager. Gemma brings strong experience in community-based support, person-centred practice, and team development.

She'll be working closely with staff teams, families, and of course the people we support, to help the service continue to grow and strengthen. Please do say hello when you see her—she's really looking forward to meeting everyone.

St Patrick's Day Celebrations

This year's St Patrick's Day was a huge success! The team truly pulled out all the stops to make sure the people we support had a memorable day filled with fun, creativity and Irish spirit.

Homes were decorated in green, white and orange; there were crafts, baking, and celebrations. Staff supported people to attend local parades, dress up, decorate, and enjoy the celebrations in whatever way suited them best.

Everyone commented on how much effort the team put in—from planning activities to ensuring people had the chance to take part in community events. Well done to everyone involved for making it such a joyful day.

Looking Ahead

As we move further into 2026, we're excited to build on this positive energy. There are lots of plans underway already—activities, outings, skill-building opportunities and the most exciting of all – opening our service up to new individuals.

More updates coming soon!



CHAPLAIN FOR NCDP

FR PADDY BOYLE



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Deaf Helpers as Volunteers in Lourdes 2026

Every year, we have a pool of Deaf Helpers working as Volunteers for the sick pilgrims in Lourdes with the Dublin Diocese since 1980's. gradually, more helpers have been learning Irish Sign Language which is a real bonus for Deaf pilgrims in need of support from the Volunteers. They are pleasantly surprised to see them signing back to them in Conversations. This added a level of real connection being part of the group.

The addition of three young Deaf adults from the Holy Family School for Deaf Children for the September 2026 pilgrimage will be a fantastic milestone as native ISL signers providing direct, peer-to-peer support for Deaf Pilgrims.

Let hope that as 1st timers, will be time well spent and they will grow in appreciation the value of friendship through their time as Volunteers helpers.

Information on Pilgrimage to Lourdes can be found on <https://joewalshtours.ie/private-tours/chaplaincy-for-deaf-people/>



HOLY WEEK / EASTER WEEK 2026

28th March 5pm CONFESSION TIME



1- 1 Sacrament of Reconciliatio
CHANCE TO SEEK FORGIVENESS

PALM SUNDAY 6pm VIGIL MASS
Penitential Service during Mass

2nd April Holy Thursday



10.30am in **St Mary's Cathedral, Dublin 1**

10am in St Anne & St Mary's Cathedral, CORK CITY

4pm Emmaus Chapel,

Jesus celebrates Last Supper
the 'New Passover'



3rd April: Good Friday in Emmaus Chapel

3pm Service and Communion:

We remember Jesus sacrifice for us on the cross

4th April Easter Sunday : Emmaus Chapel

5pm Sat Vigil Mass
Jesus has Risen



All services can be viewed
Online: www.churchservices.tv/DVI

ISL Interpreter will be present at all of above events

Wishing Each and Everyone a Blessed Easter

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