



CEO REPORT

MARY STRINGER

Welcome everyone to our June newsletter. The past few months have been extremely busy across our services, and we are delighted to share some of our recent highlights with you.

One of the key events was the visit of the Archbishop of Dublin, Dermot Farrell, who joined us to celebrate Mass in the Emmaus Chapel in DVI on the 28th April. It was a wonderful occasion, with a full chapel and a strong sense of community on display. As President of the Company, it was a valuable opportunity for the Archbishop to see firsthand the vibrant and inclusive spirit within DVI. We would like to sincerely thank him for taking the time to be with us.

In February, our Board approved the Admissions Policy for Supported Living. This important step has enabled us to formally open our Supported Living Service. We hope this will provide new opportunities to extend our services to more Deaf people in the community who may benefit from this support.

We would also like to wish all the young people and adults from Holy Family School for the Deaf the very best of luck in their Junior and Leaving Certificate exams. While we are always sad to say goodbye to our 6th year students, we are proud of their achievements and wish them every success as they move on to the next stage of their journey.

Finally, we hope that everyone enjoys a relaxing and enjoyable summer.

EDUCATION SERVICES

LINDA TIERNEY - HEAD OF SERVICES



Boarding News

The past two months in boarding have been busy, as they always are towards the end of the school year. We have had many things to celebrate, while also saying goodbye to seven graduating students who will be dearly missed by staff and fellow students alike. We celebrated their graduation from boarding and school, as well as their Debs. We have also welcomed two new activities within the community: Ultimate Frisbee and Wave Youth Club. Both have been fantastic additions to the young people's schedules, providing even more opportunities for fun, friendship, and personal development alongside their already busy activity programmes.

To round off the term, the children enjoyed one final trip to Leisure Plex, where they spent the evening bowling, playing Q-Zar, and trying out a selection of arcade games. Despite a few technical difficulties with the Q-Zar equipment at the start, the issues were quickly resolved, and everyone had a fantastic time. It was a fitting end to a busy and enjoyable term. We look back on some of the highlights and memorable moments from the past two months.

Frisbee Camp - Jackie

The young people started a Junior under 18 Frisbee camp in Phoenix Park. This is currently running from 6th May till the end of June in the local community from 17.30 until 18.30pm every Wednesday. This is run by a person from the community, who voluntarily gives his time to teach the young people new skills. It is the perfect place for young people to sharpen their skills, to improve their throws, to make new friends, to learn a new game, and to have fun on the pitch. There is a great increase in this sport, especially with the good weather here, and the young people look forward to every Wednesday evening. It is also a great way to mix with the local community.

End of Year BBQ - Jackie

The end of year BBQ took place on 21st May and was held in St. Mary's grounds. It was a great way for families and friends to come together to celebrate the good weather, each other's company and to have a fun day. Great fun was had, on the Obstacle course, the bouncy castle, and with the garden game Connect 4. The slushie machine went down a treat too and was a great way to cool down after much fun in the sun.

Many thanks to our two chefs, Anne and Ray, along with Valerie and Sean for providing excellent BBQ food, and the IDS for loaning us the Marquee. Thank you to everyone for coming along to make it a most enjoyable day.



Parent Plus Adolescent Program - Jackie

The Parents Plus Adolescent program ran for 8 weeks and was held in St. Joseph's boarding. The last session was held on Friday 22nd May. Parents of YP who attend Holy Family school for the Deaf attended this course. This was run by the facilitators, Tracey Burke, Lorraine Creed, and Jackie O'Brien. There was a good mix of deaf and hearing parents, so there was plenty of learning from each other. Parents enjoyed the discussion groups, and it was a great way for them to meet each other and to form friendships, while learning new skills in the process.

We had a celebration on Friday to mark the end of this group, and parents were presented with their certificates, and a small gift from the organization. We look forward to continuing to roll this out again next year, to parents whose children attend the Holy Family School for the Deaf.

Thank you to Reach Deaf Services for providing interpreters and boarding for letting us use their facilities.

Living Well Together celebration

The young people celebrated the Living Well Together (A guide to helping each other thrive in our shared home) in boarding with a special celebration where we placed all our individual handprints on the wall as a symbol of us helping each other. To make this work, we follow the values of HEART.

1. **H - Home** boarding is our shared home – a place to feel safe, cared for and respected.
2. **E - Empathy** we try to understand how others feel and treat them with kindness.
3. **A - Action** we get involved, take responsibility, and make positive changes
4. **R - Respect** we respect each other's space, communication, culture, and identity.
5. **T - Together** we include everyone and help build a strong, caring community.

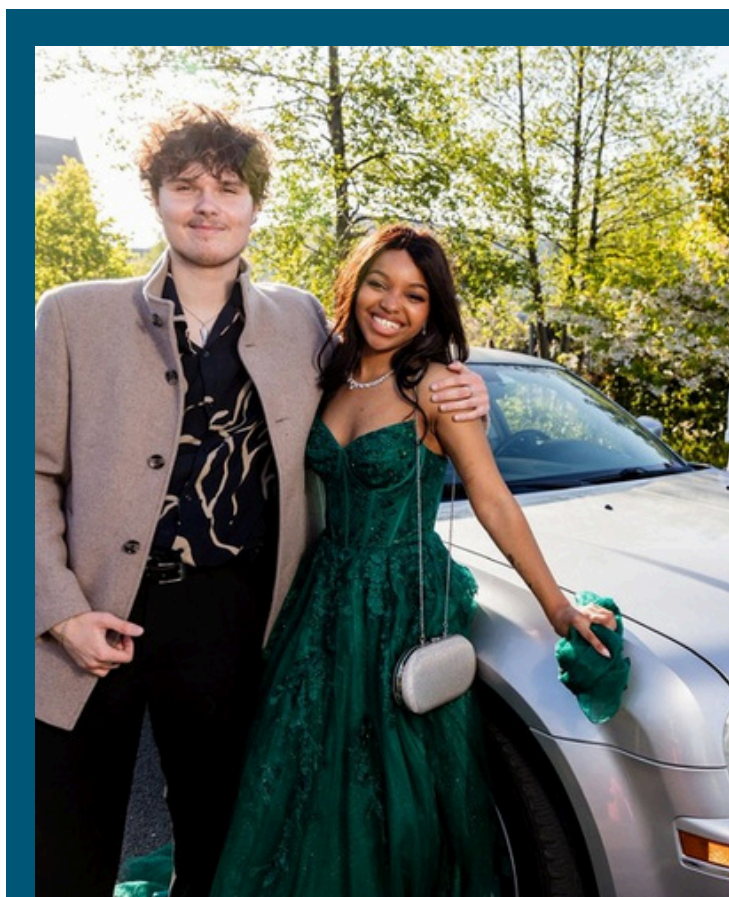
We had a special celebration to mark this event, and after placing all our individual handprints on the wall and chatting about what it means to us in boarding, we finished of the night with some pizza and drinks.

Debs - A night to remember

The Debs took place on 23 April at the Castle Arch Hotel in Trim. After months of preparation and the hard work involved in organizing such a special event, it was finally time for the students to relax, celebrate, and enjoy themselves.

Everyone looked fantastic in their elegant dresses and smart suits. It was wonderful to see friends, family members, colleagues, and fellow students come together to share the excitement of the occasion. The atmosphere was filled with joy, laughter, and celebration throughout the evening. To make the night even more special, the students arranged a limousine and hired a professional photographer to capture the memories of this important milestone. With beautiful sunshine on the day, the celebrations got off to the perfect start.

By all accounts, everyone had a fantastic night, creating memories that will be cherished for years to come.



Wave Youth Club

Wave Youth Club officially launched on Wednesday, 15th April, welcoming Deaf, hard of hearing, and CODA's aged 12-17. The club runs every Wednesday evening from 7:00pm to 8:30pm, providing a fun, inclusive, and supportive environment for young people to meet, socialize, and take part in a variety of activities both indoor and outdoor.

Throughout the season, members enjoyed a range of activities, including football coaching sessions led by an experienced Deaf football coach. Each coaching session was followed by a friendly football match, giving everyone the opportunity to put their new skills into practice. Food and refreshments were provided afterwards, allowing young people to relax and spend time together.

The season ended in style with a splash on the final night before the summer break, as everyone took part in a fun water fight. The young people are already looking forward to the club reopening in September. We encourage anyone interested in joining Wave Youth Club to go and see what it's all about.

Here's some quotes from the young people who attended Wave Youth Club

'The youth club was fun; there were games, different activities that kept us all entertained. I made some new friends, and it was good to do something with my week'

'A great experience'

'It brought us all together; I am excited to go back next year'

'I made a new friend, I'm excited to go back next week and see them. They are from my school, but I never talked to them before'

Graduation - Niall

We celebrated the graduation of seven boarders from both the St. Joseph's and St. Mary's campuses in the main canteen. The graduating students put a huge amount of effort into decorating and preparing for these special occasions. The younger students were blown away by their creativity and are already coming up with ideas for their own graduations in the years ahead. Their hard work helped make these milestones truly memorable. The event was a great success, with the chefs preparing excellent food chosen by the graduates.

There was also a video presentation featuring staff sharing their goodbyes, and three of the graduates delivered heartfelt speeches. The evening concluded with the presentation of farewell gifts from Boarding.

They were a wonderful group of graduates who, between them, had over 30 years of boarding experience with us. We hope they learned as much from their time here as we did from them. We wish them every success in the future and encourage them to stay connected to the Deaf community.



SUPPORT LIVING SERVICES

LINDA TIERNEY - HEAD OF SERVICES



Support Living Services Manager - Sharon Murphy

A Season of Growth, Community and Reflection

As we move through another busy and positive quarter, it has been wonderful to see people enjoying their homes, communities, friendships and activities. From new opportunities and outings to reflecting on important milestones from our shared journey, there has been plenty to celebrate. Thank you, as always, to our staff team, families and supporters who continue to make person-centred community living such a success.

The Little Blue Van – A Final Farewell

For many years and over 252,000 miles, a small blue van was at the heart of life in St Joseph's House. It was never just a vehicle; it was a trusted companion on countless journeys, both near and far. From everyday trips to hospital appointments and outings around the city, to memorable adventures across Ireland and even trips to England, the van carried so many people safely and faithfully. It navigated busy streets, bus lanes and country roads alike – from Swords to the Navan Road, to the Deaf Club and beyond. Wherever we needed to go, it brought us there.

More importantly, it carried laughter, conversations, friendships and shared experiences. Everyone connected with St Joseph's House has a memory of being in that van.

When St Joseph's House closed in 2021, the van's story did not end there. It remained with us throughout the transition to community living, continuing its service for another five years. It became a quiet but constant link to the past while supporting the building of something new. In some of the most significant moments of all, the little blue van helped people move from St Joseph's House into homes of their own, transporting treasured belongings, personal possessions and the pieces of people's lives that mattered most. It ensured everyone settled safely and comfortably into their new homes and communities.

Now, the time has come to say goodbye. The little blue van has completed its final journey. While it may no longer be on the road, the miles it travelled and the memories it helped create will always remain an important part of the story of St Joseph's House and the journey we have shared together. Thank you, little blue van.

Life in the Community

Over the past few months, the people we support have continued to enjoy a wide range of activities, outings and opportunities within their local communities. Whether spending time with friends and family, attending social events, enjoying summer walks, participating in local groups, or simply making the most of everyday life, it has been fantastic to see people pursuing what matters most to them.

Community living continues to create opportunities for independence, choice and meaningful connections, and we are delighted to see people thriving in their own homes.



World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

This quarter, we marked World Elder Abuse Awareness Day by taking part in activities focused on the theme:

"Safeguarding Begins at the Table"

The day provided an opportunity to raise awareness about safeguarding, dignity, wellbeing and the importance of supporting people to live healthy and fulfilling lives.

People came together to share healthy eating ideas, discuss nutrition and sample a variety of new healthy foods. It was a fun and engaging way to explore how good nutrition contributes to overall wellbeing while encouraging social connection and meaningful conversation.

The event highlighted how everyday moments, such as sharing a meal together, can promote inclusion, respect, choice and safeguarding. Everyone enjoyed trying something new and learning more about the benefits of healthy eating.

A big thank you to the Practice Team and to everyone who participated and helped make the day such a success.

Continuing to Learn and Develop

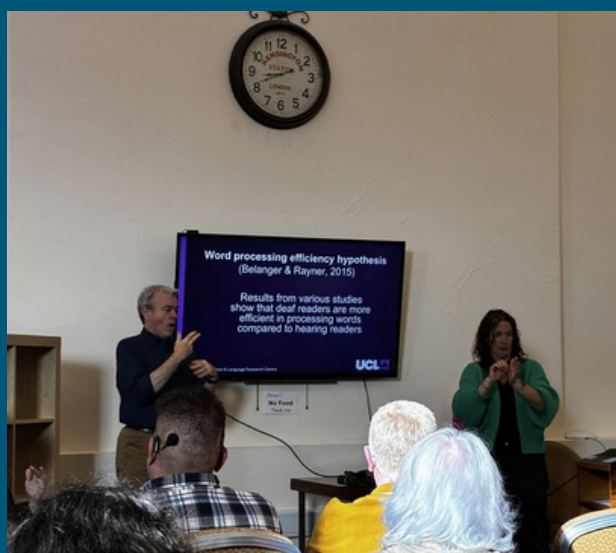
As part of our commitment to providing the best possible support, several members of the team recently attended a seminar hosted by Trinity College Dublin's Centre for Deaf Studies at Deaf Village Ireland.

The seminar, titled "Are Deaf People Bad Readers?", was delivered by Dr Kate Rowley (UCL, London) and explored the impact of language deprivation on literacy development and reading outcomes for Deaf people.

The presentation encouraged attendees to reflect on the importance of early language access, communication opportunities, and how language experiences can influence education, independence and quality of life. It also highlighted the strengths and potential of Deaf individuals when provided with accessible, language-rich environments.

The team found the session both informative and thought-provoking, reinforcing the importance of person-centred, communication-accessible support throughout our services.

We are always keen to engage in learning opportunities that help us better understand and support the people we work with, and we thank Trinity College Dublin and Dr Rowley for delivering such an insightful presentation.



Summer Holiday Adventures Ahead

There is great excitement across the service as people prepare for their upcoming summer holidays. Holidays provide an important opportunity to relax, explore new places, spend time with friends and create lasting memories.

This year, individuals will be travelling to a variety of destinations including:

- Rome
- Medjugorje
- Benidorm
- Knock
- Lourdes
- Destinations across Ireland

Whether travelling abroad, enjoying a pilgrimage, or exploring places closer to home, these trips have been carefully planned around people's interests, preferences and goals. The excitement is already building, and we look forward to hearing all about the adventures, new experiences and special memories created along the way.

We wish everyone safe travels and a fantastic holiday season.

Thank You to Our Staff Team

The success of our service is built on the dedication, kindness and commitment of our staff team. Every day, staff support people to achieve their goals, maintain important relationships, explore new opportunities and live the lives they choose. Your professionalism, flexibility and person-centred approach continue to make a positive difference.

Thank you for everything you do.

Looking Ahead

As we move into the next quarter, there is plenty to look forward to. Alongside summer holidays and pilgrimages, plans are already underway for more community activities, social events, skill-building opportunities and new experiences.

With so much happening across the service, we look forward to sharing more good news and celebrating more achievements together in our next newsletter.

Until next time, thank you for being part of our journey.



CHAPLAIN FOR NCDP

FR PADDY BOYLE



Dublin & Outreach

Frankie Berry

Ulster:

Denise Flack

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/>



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