

CHAIRPERSON'S NOTES

Myself, and the rest, of our Directors feel it's so important to share with each of our families all the wonderful achievements of our children and young people and the exciting activities they enthusiastically participate in, so hence this Newsletter. The Trust endeavours to produce one every few months for your perusal and please feel free to contact us if you wish a particular story/article to be included.

May I begin with expressing a huge thank you to each of our children and young people for your patience, hard word and loyalty over the last few months as COVID 19 forced you all to adapt to a new way of living and learning. And, of course, a sincere thank you to all our staff for their professionalism and determination with the smooth service provision adaptation. In March of this year, as the health pandemic swept across the entire globe, staff swiftly moved our direct service provision to online ensuring minimal disruption and maximum engagement. I am delighted that a wide range education, music, outdoor learning, health, dance, quiz, arts and crafts and exercise activities continued to be afforded to our members and I have personally witnessed much fun and interaction throughout the sessions. Since September, much of our service provision is taking place in our premises again although some activities are being delivered online and at home. Our Board of Directors continue to meet monthly via Zoom, however COVID 19 led to the cancellation of our Annual General Meeting this year, and we intend to hold it in the springtime of 2021. Since lockdown, over £110,000 of new funding streams have been secured, but unfortunately the current health crisis and its restrictions have led to quite a significant reduction in our fundraising efforts, however, friends and families have still continued to fundraise with donations totalling £28,650 for which I say thank you so much.



Freedom!



Miss Erin Brolly and Granny Patricia busied themselves making and selling facemasks raising a grand total of £1,000



A beautiful smile from Croise She can't wait to discover what's inside her resource pack



Will loving the outdoors and exploring lots of new sounds with Nicola

What's to read

Chairperson's Notes

Manager's Update

Welcome

New - Speech and Language Therapy programme

Makaton and Music Therapy

Staff Ramble for BBC Children in Need

Goodbye and Good Luck

Christmas plans

New Opportunities

MANAGER'S UPDATE

I can honestly contest that whilst the last 8 months have been somewhat challenging, they have truly highlighted the great spirit, dogged resilience and sheer determination of all our children and young people as they enthusiastically participated in many new activities, challenging themselves to the limit, whilst remaining so positive and had much fun along the way. This positivity has certainly been contagious and all staff managed to keep their spirits up too as they adapted quickly and professionally at the beginning of lockdown to move all activities to Zoom. Energetic sessions of Family Fitness, Tai Chi, Virtual Sports Week and Zumba, creative activities such as T-shirt design challenge, arts and crafts, music themed sessions included Jo Jingles, Music and Movement, Music Therapy and Education lessons were all enjoyed from March to August. Garden visits took place, pizza making kits and resource packs were delivered and many social outings were enjoyed throughout July and August. Throughout the summer months, our premises were deep cleaned, hand sanitisation units installed, thermometer guns purchased, social distancing signs put up and screening erected to ensure a safe reopening in September and I am so proud of everyone for taking the health pandemic and its restrictions seriously and adhering to all public health guidance. Now back in the office since September, I want to assure you all that we have had another deep clean, we continue to rigorously follow public health guidance and will endeavour to provide a thoroughly safe environment for our children, young people, parents and staff.

Welcome

Caleb O'Donnell, CJ Boyle, Kaiden Hamilton and Jonah Craig.

Since March this year, we have been delighted that 4 new members have joined and are all enthusiastically participating in a range of our services.

Follow us on facebook
@foyledownsyndrometrust
for up to date programme activities
and photographs



Miss Lois Gallagher and Daddy Damien Organised a Cricket "Bowl Out" event raising £1,245.75 - Thank you

Goodbye and Good Luck

Many of you will have met Lauren McConkey, who worked until recently as our Social Enterprise Co-ordinator, having joined the Trust as an intern from University of Ulster over 2 years ago. However, she has moved on to pastures new taking up a role in Graphic Design closer to her home in Belfast. We all wish Lauren the very best in her new venture.

Music Therapy and Makaton

Eve McIvor, one of our young people, who as a volunteer supports our Music Therapy project, has been diligently practising Makaton and putting her skills to very good use alongside Josie. The picture highlights Maisie, tentatively listening and using signs and symbols during one of the weekly sessions. Well done to Maisie and fair play to Eve.



Declan engrossed learning digital skills with his new Lenova tablet and bluetooth keyboard as part of Project 21's partnership working with Onside Project



Conan proudly showcasing his artistic skills bringing the outside in - Cool



Speech and Language Therapy

As many of you have highlighted the need for structured and regular Speech and Language Therapy for your children, we have listened and are thrilled to announce the appointment of Miss Aine Barrett, a fully qualified, experienced and HCPC registered Speech and Language Therapist who will be taking up her post at the end of November. Aine is so looking forward to meeting and supporting our children and young people and will be in touch with our families during the first weeks of December.



Calum so excited to get his hands on the pizza kindly donated by Fire and Stone Pizzeria Limavady



Cara Rose making the most of the sunshine during lockdown to decoratively paint garden furniture - Class



Myles Whiteside, Pudsey and Mum Janeen rambling in solidarity with our staff as they braved the elements to climb Binevenagh Mountain to raise money for BBC Children in Need to say thank you for funding our Music Therapy project - well done everyone



New Opportunities

COVID 19 brought new and exciting opportunities for which our young people continue to enjoy with links to Australia and Barcelona, with weekly catch ups, sharing and learning.



Christmas Plans

Unfortunately due to the restrictions arising from the pandemic we will not be having a Christmas Party or Raffle this year, however, we will ensure that elfs visit each of our children and young people and deliver a present and family activity pack.

