

St. Catherine's Community Services Centre



Annual Report 2022

Foreword from the Chair

The range of supports provided to the local community, as outlined in the body of the report, is comprehensive and unique to St Catherine's Community Services Centre. The numbers accessing the various services present an impressive tally in terms of the Centre's response to local need. This response is, at all times delivered within St Catherine's commitment to its stated principles of ensuring adherence to the highest standards of respect for inclusion, equality, individuality and diversity and is of the highest quality.

The ethos in St Catherine's is posited on supporting people towards a level of self-reliance, by ensuring increased opportunities for those at risk of exclusion through poverty and disadvantage, thus enabling them to take control over their own lives and so participate fully in society. The appreciable difference made by access to the comprehensive range of services provided by St Catherine's is demonstrated in the comments made by participants across the many programmes provided which supported people from all ages and backgrounds across the community.

These programmes, ranging from Early Childhood and Preschool Care, Parental, Family and Personal support, Afterschools, Community and Lifelong Education, Social Prescribing, Meals on Wheels and Socially Monitored Alarms, have supported people through formal interventions and appropriate referrals. St Catherine's has a carefully devised organisational structure with managers who oversee programmes and support staff in their delivery. All staff and programmes are overseen and guided by the Director of Services, without whose adherence to the highest managerial standards and protocols, this excellent service could not be maintained.

On behalf of the Board of Directors I acknowledge the high standard of work and outcomes delivered by the staff under the excellent guidance of the Director of Services. Our many excellent volunteers contribute to the successful delivery of programmes and ensure that St Catherine's has a vibrant and welcoming atmosphere. We the Board, extend our heartfelt thanks to all. Sincere acknowledgement and thanks also to the members of the Board of Directors who continue to be so generous with their time and their invaluable experience and expertise.

The Board, management and staff of St Catherine's also gratefully acknowledge the ongoing support of our funding bodies with whom we work very closely and collaboratively to deliver a comprehensive community service. St Catherine's aspires to continue to respond innovatively and appropriately as required to the identified needs within our community.

Marian Duffy – September 2023

Note from the Director of Services

Thankfully 2022 saw the removal of all Covid restrictions and the return over the year to "normal" ways of working and supporting people. This allowed us to gradually increase the numbers of people accessing services particularly in our education, personal development and social groups which had limited numbers over Covid due to social distancing and other infection control measures. Other services such as Meals on Wheels have maintained the level of demand that increased during Covid.

Covid has undoubtedly had an impact on many as anxiety levels in adults and children have noticeably increased. Many people report feeling anxious and fearful of reengaging fully or comfortably in the social activities and events including school, shopping and group activities many of us would have taken for granted before Covid. In response to this we introduced new services and really increased our efforts to support people and families to reengage and access all our services again in 2022.

Our family support services had a very busy year as more parents than ever sought support for their children and themselves. As part of our response to a growing need we were delighted to pilot a new affordable Play Therapy service in St. Catherine's which we hope to maintain and expand in response to the huge demand we have seen for it. Demand for Social Prescribing also increased in 2022 as more people came forward for support in tackling social isolation. We were delighted to get confirmation that our service would be expanded to cover all of county Carlow in 2023. Our International Women's Group fully resumed and we set up a new Ukrainian Women's Group. Over 80 women registered and attended these groups in 2022. In our Community Education programmes we were very heartened to see great outcomes for those who engaged in our Level 3 and 4 programmes in September 2021 and completed their course in June 2022. Despite significant challenges due to Covid restrictions over 100 major and minor awards were achieved and 21 learners progressed into employment or further education or training.

As always, I would like to acknowledge and sincerely thank:

- The people of Carlow who continue to support us and use our services
- Our 65+ volunteers without whom we could not operate
- Our 60 members of staff for always going the extra mile
- Our Board members for their expertise and guidance
- Our funders and partners in the statutory, voluntary and community sectors.

Niall Morris – September 2023

2022 in Figures

138

Socially Monitored Alarms and Pendants were Installed

300+ people attended our annual Traveller Pride event

23 members in the Carlow Traveller Network

142

People engaged in Social Prescribing

238 Learners attended our part-time Comm. Education courses

65+

Volunteers engaged in St. Catherine's

€48.5k

Saved by 82 savers in our new Community Savings Club

85 Families supported by the new Family Support Worker

20,905

Meals on Wheels Cooked and Delivered

5 Mothers from Moving On went on to further education/training/jobs

5 QQI Level 4 Major & **65** Minor Awards

45 Travellers attended a National Traveller Mental Health Awareness event in Knock

11 LFEL learners went on to education/training

5 earned QQI Level 4 Major Awards and **49** Minor Awards

6 secured employment

142

Children attended our 2 childcare services weekly

60 women & children attended Women Only Swimming Group

3000+

engagements with the Travelling Community

18 Making Connections learners engaged in QQI Level 3 training with **13** Minor Awards achieved

60 Women attended the International Women's Group

20 Ukrainian Women attended the Ukrainian Women's Group

50 Teens supported in the Teen Parent Support Programme

5 supported to stay in school

2 went into training

New in 2022

- The monthly Parent Hub Drop - In started in May
- 10 families attended Story Streets with Carlow Library
- New Ukrainian and Syrian Women's groups set up
- New Play Therapy pilot service started in May
- Traveller singers performed at our first ever Live and Local Musical event

Who we are!

Our mission is to provide quality services responsive to local needs, based on equality, diversity, justice and inclusion with a view to empowering and enriching individuals, families and communities in Carlow and its environs.

Aims:

- To ensure work is responsive to local need with respect for equality, individuality and diversity
- To empower people to take control over their own lives and to participate fully in society
- Reduce barriers to participation of those most at risk of exclusion, poverty and disadvantage

Objectives:

- To involve and consult with participants, target groups and local community in the planning, implementation and evaluation stages of all programmes and activities
- To work in partnership with statutory and voluntary agencies and community groups to ensure an effective, coordinated and strategic response to local needs
- To proactively encourage and facilitate the participation of those at risk of exclusion, poverty and disadvantage and to do this through the provision of information, support, community and developmental education
- To promote and support voluntary work as a means of providing services and to recognise and value the role and work of volunteers
- To evaluate and plan the work of St Catherine's on a regular basis in order to ensure that it is remaining responsive to identified need

Our Volunteers

St. Catherine's would like to thank all our volunteers for their hard work and commitment to St. Catherine's in 2022. There were over 65 volunteers who regularly assisted in Meals on Wheels, Administration and Reception, Caretaking, Childcare and After Schools. Thankfully we were able to hold our Annual Volunteer Christmas party this year. It was great to get our volunteers in for a lovely social occasion and thank them in person.

Our Board

We would like to thank all our Directors for their time and commitment to St. Catherine's. Our Directors are:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| - Marian Duffy (Chair) | - Frank Comerford (Secretary) |
| - Brian Buckley (Treasurer) | - Adrian Dunlevy |
| - Maura Dowling | - Msgr. Brendan Byrne |
| - Sean Scanlon | - Eamonn Ellis |

A staff member, Andrea Dalton also attends Board meetings. St. Catherine's Board met 10 times in 2022. The Audit sub-committee met twice. The members are the Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Finance Manager and the Director of Services.

Funding Overview

Financial performance

The financial results for the year ended 31st December 2022 are set out in the Statement of Financial Activities. These results show the combined unrestricted and restricted net assets of the charity have increased by €6,057. The total reserves at year-end were €1,392,832.

St. Catherine's generated an unrestricted (core) surplus in the year of €84,120 (2021: €214,763).

The Directors have adopted the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP).

The directors have examined the company's requirements for reserves in an operational context and in light of the main risks to the service. The Directors established a policy whereby the unrestricted funds held by the company should be at least 13 to 26 weeks of operational expenditure, in line with minimum recommended levels for the charity sector. The unrestricted funds also includes a €350,000 specific designated building fund for building works, as per the Reserves Policy. The balance of unrestricted funds including the above designated funds at the year-end was €1,069,319 (2021: 1,112,225).

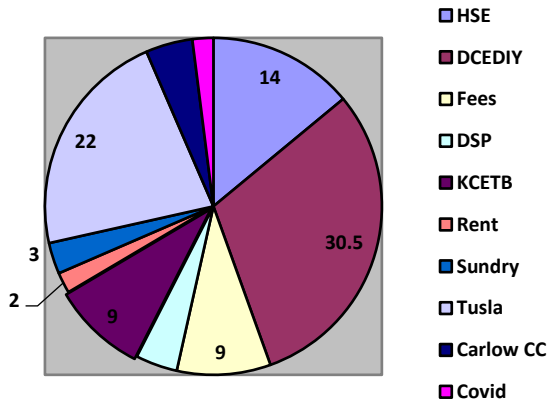
Fund Accounting:

The following funds are operated by the charity:

- **Restricted Funds:** Restricted funds include grants, donations and other income which can only be used for specific purposes. Such purposes are within the overall objectives of the charity.
- **Unrestricted Funds:** Unrestricted funds are general funds that are available for use at the Board's discretion in furthering any organisation's objects and have not been designated for other purposes. Such funds may be used to finance working capital or capital expenditure requirements.

Statement of Financial Activities						
For the year ended 31st December 2022						
	2022			2021		
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
Income from						
Donations	2,242	150	2,392	3,900	-	3,900
Government & Funder Grants	818,828	1,014,667	1,883,495	861,917	982,864	1,884,781
Total Income	821,070	1014,817	1,835,887	865,817	982,864	1,848,681
Expenditure on:						
Charitable activities	736,950	1,092,880	1,829,830	651,054	1,074,906	1,725,960
Operating Income/(expenditure)	84,120	(78,063)	6,057	214,763	(92,042)	122,721
Transfers between funds	(137,026)	137,026	-	(51,920)	51,920	122,721
Net movement in funds	(52,906)	58,963	6,057	162,843	(40,122)	122,721
Reconciliation of Funds:						
Total funds brought forward	1,122,225	264,550	1,386,775	959,382	304,672	1,264,054
Total funds carried forward	1,069,319	323,513	1,392,832	1,122,225	264,550	1,386,775

Sources of Funding 2022

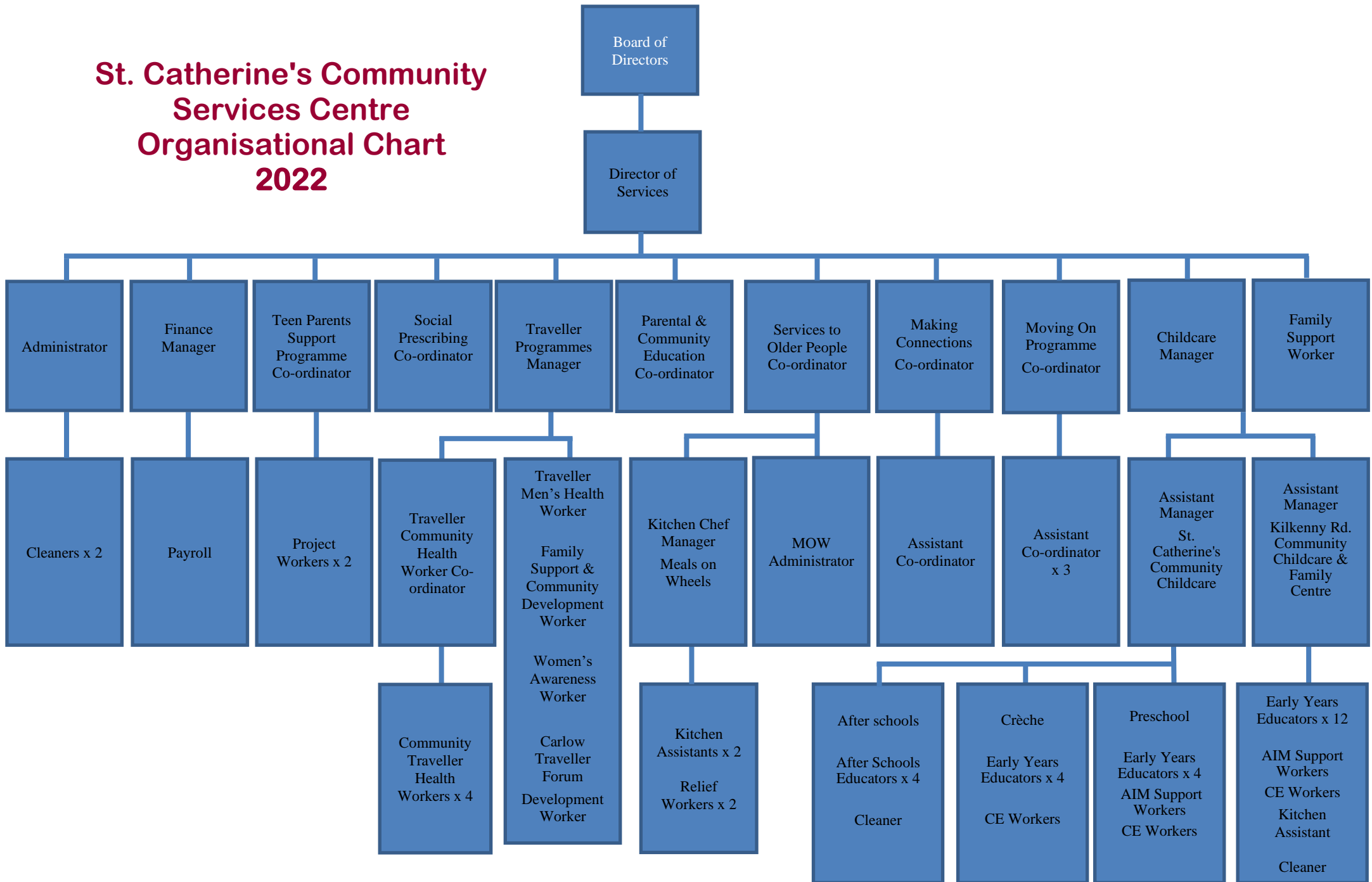


Tusla = 22%
 Dept. of Children, Equality, Disabilities, Integration and Youth = 30.5%
 Health Service Executive = 14%
 Service Fees = 9%
 KCETB = 9%
 Dept. of Social Protection = 4%
 Rental income = 2%
 Carlow County Council = 4.5%
 Covid Wage Subsidy = 2%
 Other Income = 3%

Other Income includes funding from Treoir, Pavee Point, CCDP, Pobal and Irish Rural Link.

St. Catherine's work is funded from funding agency grants for specific programmes and services, service fees and rental income and donations. We would like to acknowledge and thank our funders, service users and donors for their continuing support.

St. Catherine's Community Services Centre Organisational Chart 2022



St. Catherine's Childcare Services

OVERVIEW OF OUR SERVICES:

- We operate community childcare services with full and part-time places in St. Catherine's from 9.15 – 5.30 and Kilkenny Road from 8.30 - 5.30
- We provide high-quality, child centred services that are affordable, inclusive and enable parents to engage in employment, training and work
- We provide a safe stimulating environment for children where they are supported to reach their full potential in all areas of development
- At St. Catherine's, 22 places are available for children aged 1 to 3 years and 38 places for children aged 2 years and 8 months to school going age. In the afternoon we have 34 afterschool places available daily
- At Kilkenny Road Childcare Service, 22 places are available for children aged 1 to 3 years and 33 places for ECCE/preschool and 16 in the morning.



CONTACT:

Name: Anne Marie Ormond
Job Title: Childcare Manager
Email: annemarie@catherines.ie
childcare@catherines.ie

“From when she started to now, she has just come on leaps and bounds. And we as her parents couldn't have asked for better teachers. It helps she goes in happy and comes out happy and loads of chat about how her days have went.”

....Parent

OUTCOMES, EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

- 142 children from 100 families attended our 2 services
- 26 parents were enabled to engage in training and education in St. Catherine's and other training/education programmes
- Both services engaged with the Better Start Quality Assurance Programme to improve support for children
- National Pyjama Day held in December raised €125.00 for children's charities.
- The children's Christmas Party was held in the Seven Oaks and was attended by staff, parents, carers and Santa
- We had visits from the local community Garda and our local lollipop lady who spoke to the children about road safety.
- We took part in the Union of Churches Christmas tree festival in December. Both services made, decorated and entered Christmas trees that were displayed in St. Mary's Church
- We had an end of year Fun Day in June for all the Crèche and Preschool children and said a cheerful good bye to all children who graduated to move on to Big School
- We thanked and wished our Childcare Manager Pauline Byrne well as she moved on in 2022. We welcomed in our new Manager Anne Marie Ormond who started with us in September

FUNDERS:



An Roinn Coimisce Sóisialaí
Department of Social Protection

TÚSLA
An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency



Office of the Minister for
Children and Youth Affairs
Oifig an Aire Leanaí
agus Anochtair Orde

Community and Parental Education

Back to Education Initiative Community Strand

OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMMES:

• LEARNING FOR EVERYDAY LIFE

A 28-week community education course that actively addresses the intergenerational cycle of educational disadvantage and poverty by offering participants a positive basic holistic community education opportunity that is accredited and linked to progression. The course ran from September 2021 until May 2022, Monday to Friday, 9.45am until 1 pm.

• PREPARATION FOR WORK

The course ran for 11 weeks for 15 hours per week including a 4-week work placement. A part-time course that ran from April to June 2022, Monday to Friday, from 9.45 am until 1.00 pm. It provided participants with an opportunity to prepare for and gain experience in the labour market and to explore progression options while also achieving accreditation

“My main reason for doing the course was to get back out there, work on myself and my confidence. I feel the course has helped me and gave me opportunities to progress further in education/work”

...LFEL Participant

OUTCOMES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Number Starting LFEL 17
- 14 participants commenced the programme. 3 didn't engage from the outset and were replaced. Capacity was 14 due to Covid restrictions
- Of these 17 participants:
 - 3 had no previous qualifications
 - 9 had Junior Cert or equivalent
 - 5 had LC or equivalent
- Number Completing 12
- No. achieving QQI Accreditation 12
- Number Achieving Major Award 5
- Number that progressed onto PFW 12 +2 new participants
- Number completing a 4 week work placement 12
- Numbers to progress onto further education/TUS/CE 11
- Number that took up employment 6
- Numbers completing Manual Handling Course 7
- Family support was provided to over 15 families and 43 children as parents were enrolled on above courses



CONTACT:

Name: Andrea Dalton
Job Title: Co-ordinator of Community and Parental Education
Contact email: andread@carlow.ie

FUNDERS:



kceth

Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna
Chill Chainnigh agus Cheatharlach
Kilkenny and Carlow
Education and Training Board



An Roinn Coimisce Sóisialaí
Department of Social Protection



Carlow County
Development Partnership
Comhpháirtíocht Fhorbartha Theoranta Chontae Cheatharlach

Community and Parental Education

Community Education



Very enjoyable and fun class while also being a great opportunity to learn – would definitely recommend it to others

Community Education Participant

I loved everything at school today. Thank you teacher and all present I felt really at home - IWG Participant

OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMMES:

COMMUNITY EDUCATION CLASSES

Facilitates access to short term community based adult education courses. Low cost and accessible – fee reduction for people in receipt of social welfare. Gives participants a very good experience of their first step back into education.

DIGITAL SKILLS FOR CITIZENS PROGRAMME

Supports people to participate fully in Ireland's digital society by providing digital skills training to people who have never used the internet before.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S GROUP / SYRIAN / UKRAINIAN WOMEN'S GROUPS.

Focuses on providing a space for non-Irish women living in Carlow, who are experiencing isolation to come together. It is activity based and provides room for the group to improve their English while developing friendships and skills while further integrating into the local community.

OUTCOMES/SUCCESSES/ACHIEVEMENTS:

- In 2022, over 238 participants took part in our community education provision of part-time courses.
- International Women's Group included Syrian, Rohingya and Ukrainian women and women from many other countries. Topics including Relaxing Art with Elwira, Make Up – Over 60 participants attended
- A Ukrainian Women's Group was set up to cater for our newcomers from Ukraine. 20 women attended
- Healthy Carlow funded a Time for Me Programme, a 12 week positive mental health programme. 20 participants benefited in total. The course included Healthy Eating for a Healthy Mind, Relaxing Art, Look Good Feel Good Make Up Classes, Growing Your Own Healthy Food and an Introduction to Holistic Health
- Syrian Women's Group - Women's Only Swimming Class were organised for Women and Children – 6 weeks on Sunday evenings – over 60 participant women and children took part from over 25 families.
- 18 people attended Digital Skills classes for beginners and improvers
- Yoga for Older Persons – 15 participants attended in 2022

CONTACT:

Name: Andrea Dalton
Job Title: Co-ordinator of Parental and Community Education
Contact email: andread@carlow.ie

FUNDERS:



kceth
Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna
Chill Chainnigh agus Cheatharlach
Kilkenny and Carlow
Education and Training Board



Roinn Cumarsáide, Gníomhaíthe
ar son na hAeráide & Comhshaoil
Department of Communications,
Climate Action & Environment



CARLOW
COUNTY COUNCIL
COMHARBEI CRIONNAI CREATHARLUCHA



TÚSLA
An Ghníomhaíreacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

Traveller Programmes

Community Development and Family Support

- 952 contacts through drop-in and outreach including family support, advocacy and support on housing, health, education, social welfare and support with complex family needs
- Representation on the Traveller Interagency Group and LTACC
- Group activities including swimming and exercise programmes with 15 participants
- Supported Traveller Pride, Traveller Ethnicity Day and other events
- Increasing partnership with local agencies including the County Council, TUSLA, HSE, FRC's, CRYIS, Barnardo's and the Child & Family Support Networks

Carlow Traveller Forum

- 23 registered members and 9 Forum meetings in 2022 in Carlow and Tullow
- 300 people attended Carlow Traveller Pride including over 120 school children Professionals, Health Services and alongside the Traveller Community
- 32 Travellers participated in the Darkness into Light event for Pieta House
- 52 individuals were met through outreach
- 18 attendees for Traveller Ethnicity Day which was promoted on social media
- 4 members attended the Catholic Church Synod focus group
- 5 Travellers performed in the "Live & Local" Music event
- 18 attended Workshops in Creativity, 4 in Women's Leadership & Empowerment and 1 in Education Advocacy
- 45 Travellers attended the National Travellers Mental Health Network Awareness event in Knock



Primary Health: Community Traveller Health Worker (CTHW) Team

- Continues to improve health outcomes for families in Carlow by increasing awareness and uptake of health services
- Travellers access 80% of their health information through CTHW's
- The team had 1276 health-related contacts with the community in 2022
- Contacts were individual and in groups
- Key supports included medical cards, bereavement, health screening, referrals to health and support services, substance misuse, immunisations, counselling, children with special needs, healthy lifestyles, mental health, diabetes and cardiovascular health
- Staff completed the revamped Culture Awareness Training to roll out in 2023

Traveller Women's Awareness Worker

- Supported women and families to access info and support from local DSGBV services
- 20 women attended a DV Awareness coffee morning organised in aid of Women's Aid 16 Days of Action Against Domestic Violence
- Delivered presentations on the impact of DSGBV and the services available to Traveller women in Carlow in partnership with Barnardo's, Amber Refuge and Tusla.

Traveller Men's Health Worker

- The service covers counties Carlow & Kilkenny. It supports improvements in all areas of health including cardiovascular, mental health and diabetes awareness.
- 865 contacts with Traveller men including outreach, groups and drop-in's
- Key supports focused on Covid and vaccine information, diet & nutrition, stress, blood pressure, mental health, exercise, bereavement, alcohol, smoking cessation, substance misuse, counselling, healthy lifestyle and cardiovascular health and referrals to health and support services
- Group activities included driver theory, pool tournaments, swimming, walking, horseshoes and bowling
- 30 men attended the annual Pieta House Darkness into Light walk for mental health

CONTACT:

Name: Shane Hamilton

Title: Traveller Programme Manager

Contact email: shanch@catherines.ie

FUNDERS:



Meals On Wheels

Our Service

- St Catherine's Meals-On-Wheels service provides hot nutritious meals to older people who are unable to cook for themselves allowing them to live independently in their own homes
- The daily visit from the volunteer delivering the meal also provides social contact for recipients helping to alleviate isolation while also monitoring their well-being.
- The service continues to service Carlow Town and two outreach services – the Alzheimer Unit in Bethany House and Leighlinbridge Meals on Wheels service
- The cost of the main meal and dessert is €6.50
- The service works closely with Public Health Nurses and GP's to ensure all meals meet client's dietary requirements
- St. Catherine's is a member of the HSE Service Providers Forum, Carlow Age Friendly County Committee and Carlow Community Response Forum

SUPPORTING OLDER PEOPLE TO LIVE IN THEIR OWN HOMES LONGER

Outcomes and Achievements

- Meals on Wheels cooked and delivered 20,905 meals in Carlow town and environs in 2022
- The service catered for an average of 82 plus older people daily
- A pool of 40 volunteer drivers delivered meals weekly. Carlow Volunteer Centre support the recruitment of our drivers
- 10 Recipients had a dinner and gift delivered to them on Christmas Day
- 35 Volunteers attended our Annual Volunteer Christmas Party. Our 2022 Party was our first since the end of Covid
- MOW's operate a Birthday Book for recipients. Volunteers help make handmade birthday, get well and anniversary cards
- Carlow Community Garda Unit supported recipients with welfare checks where required
- New kitchen equipment including a Blast Chiller was installed with funding secured from the DRCD's Community Support Fund administered through Carlow County Council

Covid 19 – Our MOW service never missed a day over the whole period of Covid from 2020 to 2022 thanks to the dedication of our staff team and volunteers. They also kept in touch with all our recipients and cocooning volunteers to make sure everyone stayed safe and well



CONTACT:

Name: Maureen Egerton
Job Title: Older Persons Services Co-ordinator
Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Liaison Officer
Contact email: maureene@catherines.ie

Senior Alert Service (SAS)

What is the Senior Alert Service

- The SAS is an alarm in the home that is monitored 24 hours a day ensuring older people in need can summon help instantly in emergency situations. This alleviates the fear of living alone and supports independence
- The alarm is worn as a wristband or pendant
- St Catherine's coordinates the provision of the service in Carlow town and surrounding areas
- The service can be accessed directly by people over 65 or their families and referrals are also made through Public Health Nurses, the Gardai and local Community Alert representatives
- The Senior Alert Service scheme is administered and supported nationally by Pobal

SUPPORTING older people to live at home safely and securely with peace of mind knowing that help is only a press of a button away if they should need it!!

What our service users say:

“The first year free maintenance really helped my financial situation”

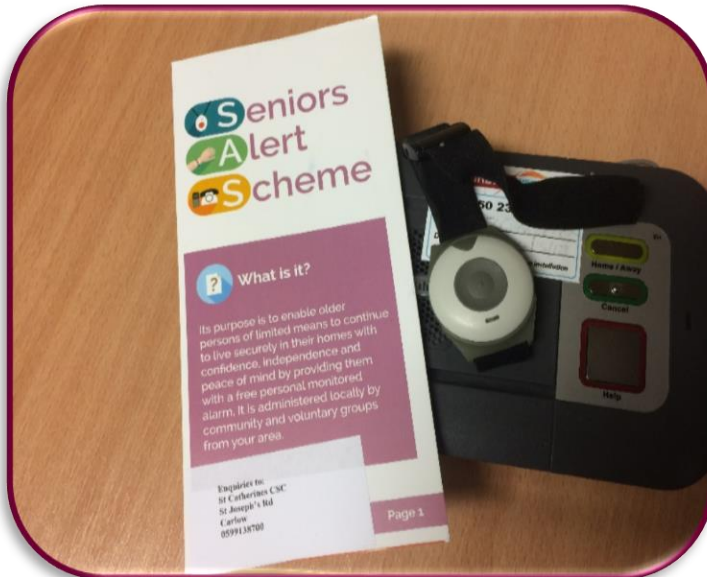
“I can be in my own home ”

“It has given me back my independence”

“The Senior Alert Service saved my mother’s life”

“We don’t worry about our parent It is affordable”

“We are confident to live on our own having the button”



OUTCOMES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- 138 applications were made for alarms and pendants in 2022. The number of mobile phone applications increased again in 2022
- As an essential service, applications continued to be processed throughout the COVID 19 lockdown. The work was done in person, by phone, email and post
- SAS was promoted in the local press, on St. Catherine’s social media, through the Public Health nurses and in presentations to local community groups
- SAS provided peace of mind and security for older people and their families allowing them to live independently in their own homes

CONTACT

Name: Maureen Egerton
Job Title: Older Persons Services Co-ordinator
Contact email: maureene@catherines.ie

FUNDERS:



**An Roinn Forbartha
Tuaithe agus Pobail**
Department of Rural and
Community Development

Making Connections

MAKING CONNECTIONS CARLOW

Making Connections is a KCETB funded Local Training Initiative (LTI) offering educational supports to individuals who have become distanced from mainstream education and training programmes.

Participants are referred from agencies and support services that work with clients who are in recovery from addiction, substance misuse, transitioning from homelessness and linked with the Probation Services.

Making Connections supports recovery through education, raising competency levels and offering tailored flexible training. The unique element of the training is the 'one to one' delivery of the programme. Learners have the opportunity to complete QQI Level 3 nationally recognised qualifications.

Outcomes & Achievements

- 18 Learners registered and engaged with QQI accredited modules.
- 9 Learners submitted modules for certification.
- 13 QQI Level 3 modules were completed and certified.
- 2 learners progressed to furtherer education at QQI levels 4 & 5.
- 1 learner progressed to the La Nua Community Employment Scheme



CONTACT:

Name: Catherine McCarthy
Job Title: Making Connections Coordinator
Email: catherinem@catherines.ie

LEARNERS STORY:

My name is Thomas. I discovered Making Connections while attending counselling for substance misuse and I noticed a poster on the wall for it. I thought it would be something good for me to do and I would give it a shot if there was a place available.

I struggle with dyslexia and the option of one-to-one training suited me better than training within a group setting. I had never had that before and always felt left behind in a classroom setting.

I started in June 2022. I really enjoyed the first appointment. I was made to feel at ease, it was very relaxed and it was handled differently to other appointments that I have attended elsewhere. I knew immediately that I wanted to engage with the programme. I started by attending one appointment a week but after a few sessions I asked could I attend two appointments instead.

Making Connections has helped me so much. I have completed two modules in Computer Literacy and Word Processing and I'm now on my third module Internet Skills. This has really helped me to build my computer skills and knowledge. I look forward to a Wednesday morning, to learning new things and attending my class. The staff make this course fun and easy to enjoy.

I have attended many courses over the years but have always lost interest within a few weeks and never ended up completing any modules. So, when I started in Making Connections and was really enjoying it, completing my first module was a really big thing for me.

Making Connections is the best course I have ever attended and I hope to go on and complete more modules. I would like to thank all the staff and everyone who helped me to pass my modules as that certificate was a big achievement and means so much to me.

FUNDER:



kcetb
Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna
Chill Chainmigh agus Cheatharlach,
Kilkenny and Carlow
Education and Training Board

Family Support

OVERVIEW OF THE SERVICE:

Our Family Support services work with families to combat disadvantage, encourage community involvement and social inclusion while supporting families to function better. We work in partnership with parents and children, other community agencies and statutory services such as Tusla. Our Family Support services include:

- Practical one to one parenting advice and support
- Providing information and advice on parenting issues, childcare, social welfare, domestic violence and abuse, bereavement and other issues.
- Signposting and helping parents access other support services
- Providing group programmes to families such as Healthy Streets & Story Streets
- Referring parents into in-house and external education and training courses and supporting parents accessing these courses in St. Catherine's
- Intensive family support to vulnerable families referred by partner agencies



CONTACT: Deirdre Brennan

Job Title: Family Support Worker

Email: deirdreb@catherines.ie

TUSLA

An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

FUNDER:

*“My son was very quiet in school before he attended your programme and now he speaks up confidently in the classroom. This programme has really helped self-esteem which continues to grow.”Story Streets
Mother*

2022 OUTCOMES & ACHIEVEMENTS

- In 2022, 85 parents availed of individual family support in person
- The Family Support Worker (FSW) outreached to new communities including Ukrainian, Syrian, Rohingya, Afghan and Sudanese
- Referral agreements were put in place with local primary and secondary schools, Carlow Regional Youth Services and Tusla Education and Welfare service
- Tusla PPFS and Social Work referred 43 children for family support in 2022.
- The FSW was lead practitioner for another 2 Meitheals.
- 10 families including 20 children participated in the 6-week Story Streets programme in conjunction with Carlow Library
- 12 children availed of our new pilot Play Therapy service
- 13 adults attended Counselling in our service that is supervised by PCI College
- Provided one to one selected Parents Plus Children and Adolescents and NVR programmes training to 6 families
- Facilitated the Summer Parent and Child group aimed at Ukrainian families. 8 families attended
- Provided intensive family support three days per week to a vulnerable family referred by Tusla
- Our monthly Tusla supported Parent Hub Drop-in supported 45 families

Teen Parent Support Programme

OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMME:

- The TPSP service covers counties Carlow, Kilkenny and South Tipperary
- The philosophy of TPSP is to offer a non-judgemental, non-stigmatising, holistic service to teen parents. We endeavour to be client led, flexible and creative in meeting individual needs.
- This is a targeted support service which focuses on specific areas of a teen parent's life in order to improve their overall outcomes in relation to parenting thus empowering them in their parenting role.
- It provides early interventions which are needs led and outcome focused, to enhance and support the wellbeing of all teen parents and their children.
- TPSP supports teen parents to remain in or return to education.
- We encourage existing services to work collaboratively to respond to the needs of teen parents.

"I didn't feel as alone. I knew that if I needed help or information, I could ring her to ask for the information or she could get it for me"

.....**Teen parent**

OUTCOMES, SUCCESSES & ACHIEVEMENTS

- 50 teen parents engaged with the service.
- 5 teen parents were supported to remain in secondary level education
- 13 teen parents took up the service out of 17 new referrals received. There were 12 Mothers and 1 Father
- 7 came from Carlow, 2 from Kilkenny and 4 from Tipperary
- 7 teens self-referred, 2 came from HSE midwives, 2 from Barnardo's, 1 from a HSE Medical Social Worker and 1 from Fresh Start Care Service
- 12 mothers were supplied with Antenatal packs & Information booklets and 1 father was supplied with the Young Dads Information booklet.
- Staff linked in remotely with 35 post primary schools in Carlow, Kilkenny and South Tipperary to promote the service.
- 2 mothers progressed into education on St. Catherine's Moving On Programme.
- Staff worked with Tusla Social Work on child protection and welfare with 4 teen parents and their babies.
- Intensive family support was provided to 2 families under Tusla's Creative Community Alternatives programme.
- An additional 10 children were supported by TPSP under the Tusla PPFs/Meitheal process in 2022.



FUNDERS:



Contact:

Name: Bernie Loughman

Job Title: TPSP Co-ordinator CW/KK/TS

Contact email: berniel@catherines.ie

Carlow Social Prescribing Service

OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMME:

- Carlow Social Prescribing Service is a pilot service launched in October 2020
- The service offers free supports that aim to reduce social isolation and improve people's health and wellbeing
- Social Prescribing supports health and wellbeing by using community-based activities and supports such as art, exercise, community health education, gardening, holistic therapies, hobbies, volunteering etc
- The Carlow Social Prescribing service is for people over 18 registered with a GP in Carlow town or Graiguecullen. In 2023 the service will expand to cover County Carlow
- Referrals come from community and health professionals or by self-referral
- The Service was showcased at a Healthy Ireland event, held in April in St. Catherine's with Minister of State Frank Feighan
- Funding for the Service will be mainstreamed by the HSE for 2023



CONTACT:

Name: Sinéad Fox/Anne Darcy

Job Title: Social Prescribing Coordinator

Contact email: socialprescribing@catherines.ie

"My life is now busy and my days are full. I have met some wonderful people..." *2022 SP participant.*

OBJECTIVES OF SOCIAL PRESCRIBING:

- A reduction in social isolation
- Enhanced mental health and wellbeing
- Improved self esteem
- Lowering of stress and anxiety
- Higher participation in exercise, social groups and volunteering
- Improved access to specific support agencies, e.g. MABS and Focus Ireland
- Increased knowledge of local community and voluntary services
- Decreased reliance on GP and Primary Care services
- Reduced crisis presentation to A&E

HIGHLIGHTS:

- 142 individuals engaged with the service in 2022 with 72 active cases at year end
- Over 40% of all referrals came from primary healthcare including GP's, nurses, therapists, mental health and other HSE staff
- Remaining referrals came from self-referrals and community services
- 24 participants engaged in Creative Writing, Holistic Health, Art, Walking and Activator Pole group activities.
- 52 participants engaged in Summer & Winter programmes including Fitness, Mindfulness, Crafts, Yoga, Cooking and Music and Relaxation classes
- The service partnered with VISUAL on a pilot "Art Social Club" programme. 5 participants engaged and the Club has successfully continued into 2023
- 5 were supported to attend Counselling

FUNDERS: 'THE HEALTHY IRELAND FUND, THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN & YOUTH AFFAIRS'



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



An Roinn Comhshaoil,
Aeráide agus Cumarsáide
Department of the Environment,
Climate and Communications

The Moving On Programme



OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMME

The Moving On Programme aims to enhance the lifelong prospects of young mothers in Carlow by enabling them to achieve inclusion in education, training, enterprise opportunities, the local labour market and their own communities.

The aims of the programme include:

- The provision of a suite of training leading towards a QQI level 4 Major Award in Employment Skills, equivalent to an ordinary level Leaving Certificate
- To achieve progression to employment, further education and training through the identification and development of realistic career or academic paths
- Through education, learning and key worker supports; build learners personal capacity, thus improving their life prospects and that of their children
- To focus on the personal development and welfare of each participant
- To support and value the parenting role
- To engage in advocacy and work with other organisations to support policy development and social change.
- To raise the confidence, self-esteem and personal aspirations of each learner

CONTACT:

Name: Tony Duffy

Job Title: Moving On Coordinator

Contact email: tonyd@catherines.ie

“The course was the exact thing I needed to get me back to education and the first step in doing something for myself. Thank you so much”.

MOP Learner 2022

Outcomes, Successes & Achievements

- In the 2021-2022 group, 17 learners joined the programme.
- 7 learners completed the programme.
- Of those that did not finish the programme, all were supported by the Moving On team and would have been referred to support services where necessary.
- Some Covid-19 restrictions were still in place until January 2022 and this put additional strain on several learners.
- Five learners achieved their QQI Level 4 Major Award
- In total, there were 65 Level 4 Minor Awards
- Two learners registered with Carlow Institute of Further Education to do Business Administration and the Special Needs Assistant course, both at QQI Level 5.
- Two learners enrolled with VTOS to do Office Administration and Information Technology.
- One learner got a fulltime job as a Retail Assistant in a local business.
- Two learners had family commitments which meant they were temporarily unable to pursue further education or work after finishing the programme
- AEGIS provided education and career guidance to learners
- MABS delivered workshops on managing money and budgeting

FUNDERS:



kceth
Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna
Chill Chaimhínigh agus Cheatharlach
Kilkenny and Carlow
Education and Training Board

TÚSLA
An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency



An Roinn Coimisce Sóisialaí
Department of Social Protection



**Carlow County
Development Partnership**
Comhghairtíocht Fhorbartha Theoranta Chontae Cheatharlach

Other Services

Counselling Service

- St. Catherine's internal counselling service responds to the emotional needs of programme participants and service users
- Clients are referred by Programme Co-ordinators and Managers
- The service is delivered in conjunction with PCI College, Dublin and is managed by their Practice Supervisor
- Covid restrictions reduced the numbers of people accessing the service in 2021. Four people accessed approximately 36 hours of support

St. Catherine's Community Savings Club

- The CSC allows people save for upcoming items and events including Christmas, First Communion and back to school costs
- The aim is to encourage people to get into the habit of saving rather than borrowing, particularly from money lenders and others offering high interest loans
- Based in St. Catherine's, the Club opens every Friday from 12.30 – 1.30pm and savers can lodge any amount up to €50 per week
- In 2022 82 members were registered and savings for the year totalled €48,550.
- Savings are up from 2021 when the Club was closed for six months due to Covid.

Save towards the cost of

Christmas 2019



First Communion

Family Events
Etc Etc

at

ST CATHERINES COMMUNITY SAVINGS CLUB

ST JOSEPHS ROAD
CARLOW

Available to Adults and children for individual savings of any amount
up to €50 max per week

Open Friday 12.30 - 1.30pm



FREE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Access and Family Support Programme with Tusla Social Work

St. Catherine's entered into an agreement with Tusla to second two staff members to provide an Access and Family Support service to the Social Work Department in 2016. The programme provided 40 hours of support weekly to Social Work in 2022.



The work includes:

- Facilitating and supporting supervised access visits between parents and children in care
- Providing family support to empower parents and enhance parental ability
- Linking families into support networks and community services

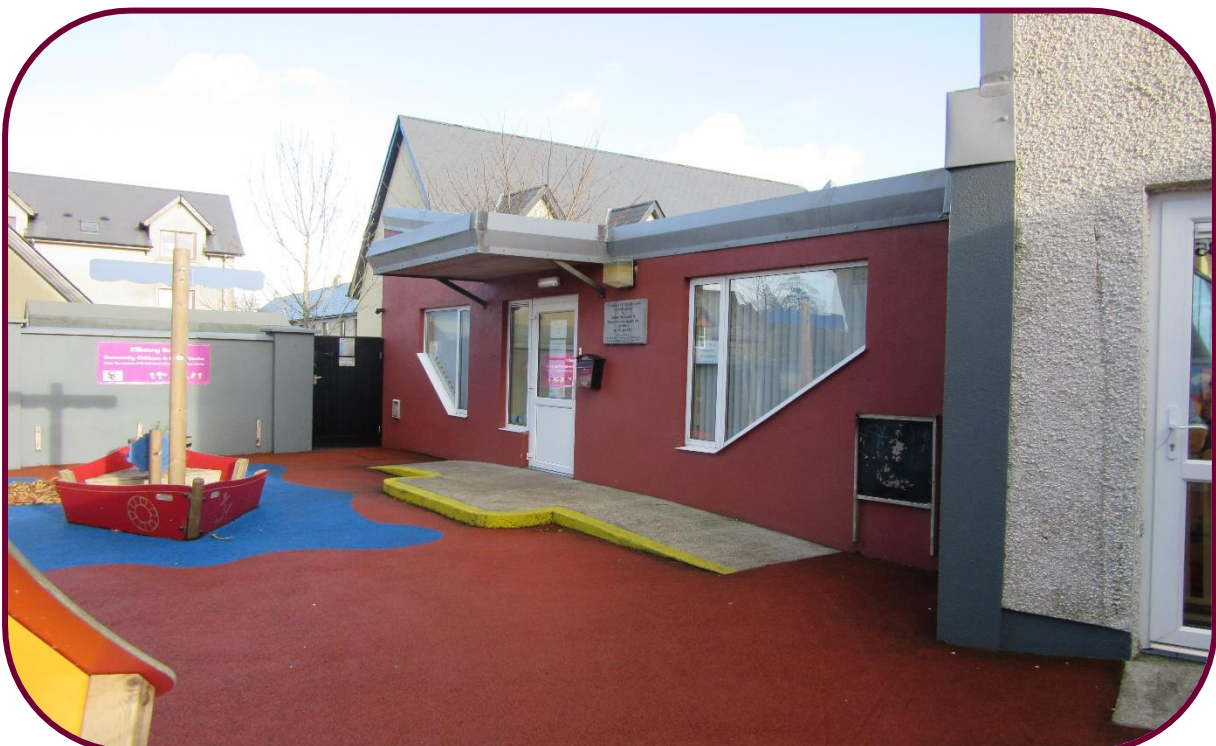
General Family Support



Family and individual support is widely provided to participants and service users accessing most St. Catherine's services and programmes. Support was provided for a wide range of issues including accommodation, domestic violence, child protection and welfare, access, education and rights and entitlements.

Intensive support is also provided to families with children in care. This support coupled with the increased confidence and self-esteem that parents derive from participating in community education improves parental capacity by building on the strengths of parents. This can prevent children going into care as well as helping children return from care to their families.

Our Kilkenny Road Childcare service



2022 Inter-Agency Collaborative Work

- HSE Traveller Health Unit and sub groups and the Regional Traveller Health Network
- Carlow/Kilkenny Mental Health sub-group
- Carlow Traveller Interagency Group (CTIG) and sub-groups including the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee and Kilkenny TIG
- Carlow Integration Forum
- Tusla Child and Family Partnership, Prevention and Family Support network (PPFS) in Carlow and Kilkenny and Carlow and Kilkenny Child and Family Support Networks (CFSN's)
- Teen Parent Support Programme National Inter-Project Committees
- County Carlow Public Participation Network (PPN) and Local Community and Development Committee (LCDC)
- Aontas Community Education Network
- Irish Rural Link and the National Meals on Wheels Network
- Carlow Age Friendly Alliance
- County Carlow Children and Young Person's Services Committee (CYPSC) and Sub-Groups including the DSGBV sub-committee
- South Tipperary CYPSC Parenting Working Group
- Pavee Point and Irish Traveller Movement Committees
- Comhairle na nOg
- St. Luke's Social Inclusion Group and the St. Luke's Patient Partnership Forum
- Traveller Culture Awareness Training Steering Committee
- Carlow Social Inclusion Forum
- Carlow Suicide Prevention Planning Group and the Consultation Working Group,
- Social Prescribing Service Steering Group
- Connecting for Life
- Carlow Joint Policing Committee

Additional Services based in St Catherine's

- **Kite** - offers support to adults with a diagnosis of ASD. KITE provides supports that are tailored to the individual's needs. Specific programmes are available in response to the challenges experienced by the people who attend KITE Services. In line with New Directions; services focus on the individual's choices in accordance with their own wishes, needs and aspirations. Kite Services are located across Kilkenny, Carlow & Wexford
Phone: 056-7712913 Email: KITE@hse.ie

- **Accord** - www.accord.ie

Accord is a voluntary organisation that aims to promote a deeper understanding of Christian marriage. They offer people the means to safeguard and nourish their marriage and family relationships through the provision of pre-marriage courses and counselling services. **Tel. 086 4149034**

- **Shine** – www.shine.ie

Shine offers a variety of programmes and services to support individuals, families and groups affected by mental health challenges. It works to enhance recovery and challenge negative attitudes and behaviours.

- **Alcoholics Anonymous** – www.alcoholicaanonymous.ie

AA is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking.

- **Al Anon** – www.alanon.ie

Al Anon is a support organisation for families, relatives and friends whose lives have been affected by someone else's drinking.

- **Grow** – www.grow.ie

Grow is a Mental Health Organisation, which helps people who have suffered, or are suffering, from mental health problems. Members are helped to recover from all forms of breakdown, or indeed, to prevent such happening.

- **Overeaters Anonymous** – www.overeatersanonymous.ie

Overeaters Anonymous offers a program of recovery from compulsive eating. Worldwide meetings provide a fellowship of experience, strength and hope where members respect one another's anonymity. OA charges no dues or fees; it is self-supporting through member contributions.

- **National Advocacy Service for People with Disabilities** –

The National Advocacy Service (NAS) was set up to provide independent, representative advocacy services for people with disabilities. www.advocacy.ie