

## Omagh Boys and Girls Youth Club Annual Report April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022 – March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023

Founded in 1952, Omagh Boys and Girls Youth Club is the only full-time voluntary youth organisation in the Fermanagh Omagh District Council region. Under the new Funding Arrangement Scheme for the voluntary sector which was instituted by the Education Authority in 2021, funding on a two year cycle (April 1<sup>st</sup> 2021-March 31<sup>st</sup> 2023) was awarded to the club following a successful application by the management committee, thus replacing all previous annual funding arrangements.

The Education Authority Youth Service set a Delivery Plan on the priority programme themes of youth work to be delivered taking into account government research data, local authorised research into the needs of young people and the local community social and economic profile.

The Education Authority Youth Service identified the following four key primary areas for the club to focus; raising standards for all, closing the performance gap, developing the non-educational workforce and improving the non-formal learning environment, with a specific action plan of programme themes to be delivered relevant to each of these four priority areas.

*Raising standards for all required delivery of three stakeholder events annually involving young people, parents, community, schools, the Education Authority and other key stakeholders; the delivery of two celebrations and feedback events annually and ensuring the delivery of quality services to young people through the implementation of a quality assurance framework system and to provide the EA with an annual improvement plan report.*

**Action Taken** – Four stakeholder events were organised with young people and parents (feedback from summer scheme programmes and consultation with both young people and parents in respect of the new club programme to commence in September 2022) and one with teachers and young people from nine primary schools during an outreach programme held in the youth club and one Launch of Mental Health Leaflet (refer Senior Committee aged 14-18year olds) with stakeholders with feedback.

We delivered three celebration events a) The return to normal life for young people with a hundred children of primary age 10/11 from all local primary school in a huge extravaganza of football through the Mc Donald's 6 in May 2022, an event to celebrate of coming together through sport and exercise, of particular significance post COVID to help young people. The following prizes were awarded, a shield and substantial trophies for the winners and runners up; an All-Star award for the best team player from each of the nine schools which participated; best male and best female player, best goalkeeper and best goal. This event merited a two page spread in the both local news papers. b) for TBUC and Summer Scheme July and August 2022, through presentation of certificates of participation to young volunteers and a hospitality function to celebrate the successful completion of their respective projects with parents and young people, c) for Creative Dance June 2022 with hospitality for parents/carers and young people and show casing their dance routines.

- Quality Assurance is constantly monitored through our governor responsibility framework document which is reviewed at every management committee meeting for prior targets set and achieved. All programme themes are evaluated and regular consultation is carried out with relevant stakeholders. Staff have participated in training to enhance their skills in writing aims and objectives and programme design, a new initiative (Management Information System (M.I.S) to ensure that we have in place data collection, monitoring and evidence systems and procedures for all of our work, recording all qualitative and quantitative data.)

and Understanding Children's Behaviour Training. The EA Youth Service undertakes four moderation visits per annum to make an assessment on the standard of delivery of the different aspects of the themes of work and governance. The assessment classification recorded by the Education Authority Youth Officers on each of these four visits was, 'outstanding'

Our annual financial accounts are prepared by an independent firm of chartered accountants to meet the robust standard of compliance set by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland in respect of annual financial accountability. These accounts are excepted without further enquiry until the next due date, December 21<sup>st</sup> 2023.

Our club was represented by the leader-in-charge at the three LAG (local area group) meetings which is comprised of representation from the statutory, community and voluntary sector, including young people, who meet to provide advice and make recommendations based on consultation to support the development and implementation of local youth service provision in the area and one LAG meeting was a sharing of projects where our Senior Member Group facilitated one workshop over 6 x 15 minute sessions to other young people and workers from Fermanagh and Omagh District Council Area. The leader-in-charge co-ordinated one meeting, with more planned, with all the full time EA Youth Service youth workers in Omagh to help deliver a club initiative on mental health awareness to take place in October 2023. The leader-in-charge attended Data Protection Training and along with secretary of the management committee they both attended Good Governance training facilitated by Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action (NICVA) and The Charity Commission.

*Closing the performance gap required delivery of programmes based on the participation needs of children and young people; to provide generic non-targeted provision for young people up to 18 years over 6 evenings per week and 50 weeks per year with a minimum of 35 of young people in attendance per 3 hour session; delivery of a 4 week summer programme for 5 days per week over a 4 week period in July and August targeting 8 to 13 year olds for 3 hour per day; delivery of 1 outreach session (3 hours) per month within the area outlined in this specification; delivery of 2 youth volunteering programmes for a minimum of 8 x 16 – 18 year olds per annum providing pathways into leadership and delivery of three Social Action/Citizenship programmes or projects annually with a) 10 x 9 – 13 year olds b) 10 x 14 – 18 year olds.*

**Action Taken** – We provided generic non-targeted provision for young people up to 18 years over 6 evenings per week and 50 weeks per year with a minimum of 35 of young people in attendance per 3 hour session. Activities included boxing for boys and girls (a total of 20 gold, 8 silver and 2 bronze medals were achieved at county, provincial and 1 Gold and one Bronze in Irish national championships), netball, indoor soccer, dance (Achieving 1<sup>st</sup>s, 2<sup>nd</sup>s and 3<sup>rd</sup>s in UK Dance for CREW, SOLOs, Duos), karate, arts and crafts, junior club, Tuesday activity group, drop in. We delivered a very successful summer programme for seven weeks for 8 year olds – 18year olds with an average of 40 in attendance per day for 5 days per week and 3 hour per day.. A transition programme was delivered to young people in P7 making the transfer from primary to the post primary stage in September 2022.

There were 12 outreach sessions delivered:

April 22 - Delivery of Drugs Awareness leaflets which were researched, prepared and 2000 leaflets printed for delivery to schools in Omagh Area.

May 22 – Mc Donald 6's event as previously outlined.

June 22 – –'Spirit of the Street' Community Football at CKS 11-14 years

July 22 – Summer Feist at Lammy Secondary school age.

August 22 – Summer Fest at Lammy for Primary school age

September 22 –'Spirit of the Street' Community Football at CKS 15+ years

October 22 – Halloween Party for all community

November 22– Delivery of Drugs Awareness Leaflets to secondary schools in Omagh  
December 22– Social action with Party for Senior Citizens to include giving out warm blankets  
January 23– Completing a Mental Health Awareness Pocket Size Leaflet for the community  
February 23– We have completed a Mental Health Awareness Leaflet for the community and printed 2000.  
March 2023 – Delivery of mental Health Leaflets to secondary schools

One Volunteer Programme has been completed for the specification with OCN Accreditation in Planning and Organising the Summer Programme for July and August 2022 with ten participants. The second Programme involved the training of young people in Mental Health Awareness so that they were able to develop, prepare, produce a Mental Health Leaflet for secondary school age young people to help them with information and strategies to cope.

We have completed four Social Actions projects this year though only mandated to undertake and deliver 3 projects:

1. completed on Mental Health Conference in May 2022.
2. completed a Halloween Party for the public due to having no fireworks because of a decision by Fermanagh and Omagh District Council this year in October 2022
3. completed a Senior Citizens Party in December 2022
4. completed a Mental Health awareness Leaflet for the public in February 2023

Developing the non-educational workforce required *the delivery of recruiting and retaining 6 volunteers (18+) within the service provision; target recruiting up to 5 new volunteers a year; offer induction training to all new staff; offer leadership opportunities to volunteer; offer specialist training for specifically identified needs when needed and to offer trainee youth support worker programme to two young people 18 – 24 years.*

**Action Taken** – We have recruited ten adult volunteers. Induction training has been offered to all staff. Training of part/full time staff and volunteers is very important to Omagh Boys and Girls Club so we have offered support/supervision sessions to all staff and development of all staff through three staff development sessions on Programme Development, Management Information System training (M.I.S) and Understanding Children’s Behaviour. We are developing links to offer OCN Level 2 in Youth Work Practice for 18+ year olds.

Improving the non-formal learning environment required *delivery of participative structures for young people for two age groups 9 – 13 year olds x 10 members and 14 – 18 year olds x 10 members and ensuring that the principles of CRED are embedded within youth work programmes and youth provision through training of all staff in CRED and Inclusion with Youth and enhancing all our services and practice.*

**Action Taken** –

**Junior Committee aged 9-13years old.**

12 young people were recruited, from feedback obtained in evaluation of different programmes, for our Junior Committee.

This group has developed their committee skills and worked on a Social Action Project (which is part of our specification) for senior citizens which was called Heat and Eat Project. The young people decided to raise funds to buy warm throw blankets for 50 senior citizens and also to

provide them with a Christmas meal due to the economic hardship. The group then completed a Coping Skills Course to include Internet Safety.

**Senior Committee aged 14-18 year olds.**

12 young people were recruited, from feedback obtained in evaluation of different programmes, for our senior committee. They met on Wednesday nights. They completed a 4 week training on Mental Health awareness and continued for another 16 weeks to plan, develop and produce a Mental Health Leaflet for secondary school young people to help them with coping strategies and vital information to help them and to help their friends in need.

We had 20 young people (55% Catholic and 45% Protestant) registered for TBUC and have completed an OCN in Good Relations and Diversity Level 1. We also had a full programme of activities involving cultural awareness training and including trips out for fun and informative trips to murals and places of interest for both communities.

20 young people attended a TBUC celebration event on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> March in Waterfront Hotel, Derry organised by the regional TBUC team where they gave a dynamic presentation on their journey with TBUC which was greatly received by the audience and the regional EA TBUC Team. We have produced mental health, internet safety and positive activity posters in different languages.

The beneficial outcomes of these youth work programmes for young people have been particularly effective in the aftermath of the Covid 19 pandemic and with the cost of living crisis. Our membership this year was 368. Having the opportunity also to participate in the wide variety of sports options (through the participation theme activities) was so vital for young people's mental and physical well-being. There is a mountain of evidence showing the benefits that sport and physical activity can have for young people's physical and mental health. Children and young people who are active for the recommended sixty minutes or more per day are less likely to be overweight in childhood and suffer from long term health conditions in adulthood. Research by Sports England shows that the more active a young person is, the happier they are and less likely to experience loneliness. They are also more likely to show character traits of resilience. Research by the Youth Sport Trust found that two thirds of school children said being active helped them learn, while three quarters of teachers said it improved pupils' academic progress.

Other outcomes identified for young people have been a development of their thinking, life and work skills. A safe space in our youth club environment is provided for their active involvement in activities, where they feel valued and their achievements are recognized. There is an enhancement in their personal capabilities, particularly greater awareness and development of leadership skills, confidence and self-esteem and a development of positive inter-peer relationships. This personal, social and educational development has resulted in young people taking responsibility, becoming engaged in active citizenship projects which promote volunteerism, inter – community and inter-generational relations and greater understanding of others lives whilst their awareness of threats to them through drugs and alcohol awareness courses has informed them of risk taking behaviour. With such adult guidance and leadership these young people are on a continuing journey through participation in the range of programmes available to acquire the key transferrable skills, so essential in the adolescent transition to adulthood and the world of work e.g. problem solving, creativity, using one's own initiative, taking responsibility, working as part of team, showing empathy and communication with others. These authenticated skills are recorded by young people and are used as evidence of skills when making application for part time and indeed for fulltime posts in addition to testimonials for university applications.