

## **Report to the Charities Commission for the financial year 1/9/2019 - 31/8/2020**

### **SCHOOL FOR LIFE ROMANIA Registered Charity number 1062953**

Trustees: Ruth Brown, Dave Emptage, Katie Goodier, William Gould, Sylvia Gurr, Lizzy Hartley, Roger Mason

#### **1) Brief summary of the purpose of the charity for the public benefit**

School for Life Romania raises funds in the United Kingdom through monthly standing orders and fundraising events and sends funds directly to support our sister organisation in Siret, Romania "Scoala Pentru Viata" (SPV). There are no overheads or costs in the UK (apart from bank transfer charges), because the Trustees meet the costs of promotional material and regular trips to the project in Romania through their own personal funds. Trips are undertaken by Trustees at least once a year to the project in Romania, in order to offer support to Scoala Pentru Viata, and to gain first hand insight into the progress of the project. This informs our fundraising and promotional material in the UK. On some occasions, interested supporters of School for Life Romania from the UK accompany Trustees to the project in Siret to inform their own understanding of the challenges faced by the young people with disabilities in Romania. These trips also offer opportunities to forge links with local charities in Romania who are achieving similar purposes, in order to share information and provide Scoala Pentru Viata with more local sources of support.

The Director of Scoala Pentru Viata reports directly back to School for Life, informing of the educational direction of the project and of the allocation of funds. Scoala Pentru Viata employs Romanian special needs teachers and sessional outreach workers. A salary is also provided to the administrator who oversees the upkeep of the buildings in Siret. Although Scoala Pentru Viata is responsible for the allocation of the budget, they are supported and guided by the School for Life Trustees. Scoala Pentru Viata deliver education and therapeutic support to young adults with disabilities who have grown up in an institution in the north of Romania.

There are three ways that this is achieved;

- a) Our supported housing project has enabled four young people from the institution to now live independently with outreach support in the community of Siret.
- b) Our community learning hub, situated in the heart of the community, provides an environment that can be accessed by young people with disabilities, where they receive educational and therapeutic support delivered by Romanian educators.
- c) Our outreach workers go into the institutions to deliver therapeutic interaction to the young people who are the most disadvantaged and who are not able to access the community facility.

#### **2) Update in respect of the main activities undertaken by the charity during the period of 1/9/19-31/8/20, with reference to the Charity Commissions Public Benefit Guidance**

Project Areas:

##### Learning Community Hub

Located centrally in the town of Siret, the hub was attended on a regular basis, prior to the start of the pandemic and when Corona Virus restrictions have allowed it, by 26 young people with disabilities living in both the institutions and in supported living within the community of Siret.

Educational activities continue to be undertaken each weekday including reading, writing, maths, arts and crafts, gross motor activities in the gymnasium and outside in the courtyard, self-care activities and gardening and independent living skills. The students have continued to benefit from the experience of a nurturing, safe, secure, relaxed and happy environment to learn in.

During the course of the Coronavirus pandemic Scoala Pentru Viata staff have adhered to the Romanian government guidelines and the students have been carefully supported to try and understand the impact of the virus on themselves, the country and the world. Although there have been periods of time when Romania has been in a strict lock down and the movements of staff and students restricted and the project was unable to operate for two months, when guidance has enabled students to attend the Learning Community Hub this has been done successfully in smaller groups and using protective equipment and social distancing. No staff or students caught the Corona Virus during this period. At times during the pandemic when movement of the students was restricted and they were prevented from coming out of the hospital where they resided, the teaching staff provided outreach work within the hospital.

#### Outreach within the Institutions (two Romanian Neuropsychiatric Hospitals in Siret)

Two members of staff (Violetta and Rodica) have continued to support adults living within the 2 neuropsychiatric hospitals, Cronicii 2 and Cronicii 3, working with those with more profound disabilities who are unable to leave the institution to access the community. Our outreach workers provide therapeutic input in the hospitals through intensive interaction, games and musical and craft activities. Again this work has been interrupted over the course of the year as a result of the Corona Virus pandemic and government restrictions imposed on visitors to the hospitals. A lot of the work has been carried out outside in the grounds of the buildings.

#### Independent Living

Ongoing enquiries continue to be made into the setting up of comprehensive trust funds to ensure the future financial stability and security of the three ladies living in SPV's supported accommodation. The fourth lady continues to live happily and independently with her partner and child in the Siret community. The ladies continue to thrive in their environment, providing support to the teaching staff with the school activities and successfully carrying out cleaning jobs within the community.

#### Buildings

The SPV team have continued to work hard to maintain the good standard of the buildings in the learning hub and independent living space. The insides of both buildings have been thoroughly cleaned and repainted with a hygienic whitewash. Fire equipment has been checked and refreshed. A new flooring has been put down in the independent living building. Sinks and toilets have also been both mended and replaced. The boiler has been repaired and some parts have had to be replaced.

## Staffing

### *Overview:*

Director, Elena Harasemiuc (Doina)

Admin / estates: Radu Harasemiuc

SPV Educators – Loredana and Carmen

Outreach sessional workers – Rodika

Social Worker – Raluca

Accountant

Two SPV educators, Loredana and Carmen, have continued to work in the education hub when they have been able to. Romania underwent a strict lock down at the height of the Covid 19 pandemic and as mentioned above there were two months when the hub was unable to be used due to the restrictions in place. These educators have accompanied our SPV outreach workers when able to, into the hospital buildings to facilitate their work there.

One of our outreach workers, Violetta, has recently left her employment at SPV for another role, leaving Rodica to continue the work in the hospitals with the more severely challenged people who are unable to leave the hospital building due to their levels of need.

A social worker continues to be employed by SPV, and works alongside SPV outreach workers in the 2 hospital buildings, supporting with group work and therapeutic services, and providing a link between the SPV Foundation, Social Services, and the Hospital services ( which are under the control of the Ministry of Health).

## Administration

The SPV foundation has been re accredited with the authorities in Bucharest, and the collaboration contract has been renewed with the Neuropsychiatric hospitals in Siret.

Updated Safeguarding policies that comply with the new EU GDPR laws have been written and are in place for SFL (UK) and SPV (Romania).

Data protection - The charity continues to abide by the GDPR Data Protection Policy.

## Public Benefit

The learning hub provides teaching sessions in the heart of the community to students every morning from 9am - 12 noon. The students are divided into two classes depending on level of ability. The students live in either the community in group homes, or in one of the neuropsychiatric hospitals, and are not able to access employment due to their levels of learning and physical disability. The young people benefit greatly from this opportunity to interact with one another in a happy and relaxed learning environment, with opportunities to learn safely both indoors and outdoors. They are provided with opportunities to learn new skills as well as consolidate existing skills, and to build on their social and emotional well being and development. Equally the students in the neuropsychiatric hospitals benefit greatly from the therapeutic input that they receive from the outreach workers, as detailed above.

Whilst opportunities for trustees to visit the project in Siret have been prevented over this last year due to the global pandemic, the trustees have kept in regular contact with the director of SPV, who

has provided administrative reports and updates. Trustees meetings and the AGM have been conducted via zoom with the advantage that the director from SPV has been able to attend some of those meetings too which has been beneficial for the sharing of information and progress. The team in SPV have reported that progress and positive interactions and learning experiences have continued to be made, both in the learning hub and the hospitals, in spite of the interrupted and reduced service provision caused by the pandemic.

The Trustees of School for Life Romania are aware of and have taken into account the Charity Commission's Public Benefit Guidance and have had regard to this in order to guide and support the ongoing work of the charity operating in Siret, Northern Romania.

#### Future of the project

The uncertainty and impact of Brexit, and the Corona virus pandemic, continues to shadow future financial forecasts for the charity. We are realistic in our understanding that the sponsorship base is unlikely to grow and as the project costs continue to increase, it is our intention to work with the SPV staff to ensure that over the next five years our expenses do not increase and that we secure a future for the young ladies in the SPV accommodation. We anticipate a 3 year plan to wind down the education project and then a further 2 years to ensure a secure future for the young ladies living in the SPV accommodation.

### **3. Finances**

Financial Year 1/9/2019 - 31/8/2020 total income = £47,849

Standing orders, donations, fundraising = £50,334

Gift Aid rebate = £2483

Income has decreased annually by £0

Standing order base = £ 1300 approximately per calendar month.

#### Fundraising

Fundraising events have diminished as a result of the Corona virus pandemic and the social distancing restrictions in place. Over the last financial year significant events have included a 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Music Night, a St Andrew's Day Ceilidh, the sale of hand made Christmas cards, and fundraising through online Reiki therapy.

### **4. Reserves Policy**

The charity does not have a reserves policy. Due to the small turnover, it is unable to keep a large sum in reserve. However, we do keep a sum of around £1000 in a separate account to cover any unexpected costs that may arise. This sum is always included in the Annual Accounts under Current Assets.

### **5. Serious incidents**

The Charity had no serious incidents or other matters that trustees should have reported to the Commission.

## **Report and Accounts**

**School for Life – Romania**

**Charity Number: 1062953**

**31 August 2020**

**School for Life – Romania**  
**Charity Number: 1062953**  
**31 August 2020**

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## **Independent Examiner's Report to The Trustees of School for Life – Romania**

I report on the accounts of the trust for the year ended 31 August 2020 which are set out on pages 3 and 4.

### **Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner**

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of accounts and you consider that the audit requirement of section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 ('the Act') does not apply. It is my responsibility to state, on the basis of procedures specified in the General Directions given by the Charities Commissioners under section 43(7)(b) of the Act, whether particular matters have come to my attention.

### **Basis of independent examiner's report**

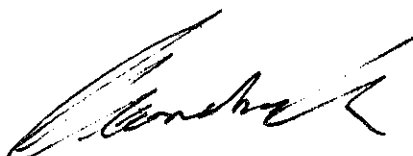
My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

### **Independent examiner's statement**

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
  - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the Act, and
  - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the Acthave not been met, or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Keith Lownsbrough C.G.M.A., A.C.M.A.

 3 MAY 2021

**School for Life – Romania**  
**Charity Number: 1062953**

**Income and Expenditure Account**  
**For the year ended 31 August 2020**

	<u><b>2020</b></u>	<u><b>2019</b></u>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Income</b>		
Donations and sponsorships	<b>47,849</b>	<b>24,977</b>
Tax relief	2,483	2,925
Bank interest	2	2
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<b>Total income</b>	<b>50,334</b>	<b>27,904</b>
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<b>Expenditure</b>		
Romanian expenditure:		
Salaries and taxes	22,927	23,765
Building and other	5,735	5,973
Bank charges and interest	244	252
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>28,906</b>	<b>29,990</b>
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<b>Surplus/(Deficit) of income over expenditure</b>	<b>21,428</b>	<b>(2,086)</b>
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**School for Life – Romania**  
**Charity Number: 1062953**

**Balance Sheet**  
**31 August 2020**

	<u><b>2020</b></u> <b>£</b>	<u><b>2019</b></u> <b>£</b>
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>		
School building	<u>83,236</u>	<u>83,236</u>
 <b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
English bank balances	20,444	1,277
Romanian bank balances	11,261	8,558
Cash in Transit		
Covenant/Gift Aid tax relief owed	<u>2483</u>	<u>2,925</u>
 <b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<u>34,188</u>	<u>12,760</u>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<u><b>117,424</b></u>	<u><b>95,998</b></u>
 <b>RESERVES</b>		
Fund account		
Balance at 1 September 2019	28,604	30,690
Surplus/(deficit) of income over expenditure for year	<u>21,428</u>	<u>(2,088)</u>
Balance at 31 August 2020	50,032	28,604
 Building revaluation reserve	<u>67,391</u>	<u>67,391</u>
 <b>TOTAL RESERVES</b>	<u><b>117,423</b></u>	<u><b>95,995</b></u>

