



Sound Friends Deaf Children's Society

Trustees Annual Report 2022-2023

Sound Friends Deaf Children's Society was set up in 2011 to support families of d/Deaf children. Many d/Deaf children (statistics suggest slightly more than 90%) are born to hearing parents and so it is a common occurrence that these parents need advice on how to deal with this diagnosis, communicate with their child and make plans for their social and academic lives. The charity supports members informally through questions being asked in their closed Facebook group (utilizing the shared experiences of the group), provides information from partner charities, signposts to other services where appropriate, and organises face-to-face events. Our events provide opportunities for parents to share experiences, ask questions and for the children to meet and play, to make new friends, help to develop and improve social skills.

Sound Friends DCS is affiliated with the **National Charity (NDCS – National Deaf Children's Society)** and is a registered charity within Northern Ireland – NIC100725.

We currently cover the following towns and surrounding areas:

- Portadown
- Lurgan
- Craigavon
- Banbridge
- Newry
- Kilkeel

Chairperson : Nataliia Buchanan

Treasurer : Ruairi Magennis

Secretary : Stephnie Thompson

Sound Friends (SF) held an AGM in December 2021 and a new committee were elected at the AGM. The new committee initiated a membership survey to further understand the needs, wants and preferences of its members to help focus its aims. There was a great response from this, and the events planned for the reporting year subsequently, were based on the findings of the membership survey. SF has seen its membership grow incrementally.

Events held January 2022- March 2023

- 30th of January 2022- Airtastic Craigavon
- 20th of February 2022 -Brownlow Hub Bee Active.
- 3rd of April 2022- subtitled movie Banbridge -Sonic 2.
- 7th of May 2022- Tayto Park trip.

- 20th of July 2022- Beginners Bite Size Camp Lime Park Equestrian Centre
- 21st of July 2022 - Tannaghmore garden meet up.
- 22nd of October 2022 -Halloween Party Newry transport provided.
- 17th of December 2022 -Signed Panto/Christmas party Armagh Market Place Theatre.
- 24th of February 2023- AGM

The members are happy to be back to meet in person, and we've noticed that towards the end of the year the attendance of the events was noticeably growing.

Due to the cost-of-living crisis, the charity experienced a predictable reduction in donations as disposable incomes fell across the region. We would however, like to highlight that we were the beneficiary of two sizeable donations. One of our member's family created a Halloween display in their garden, which was visited by many members of the Newry community. This was a fantastic boost for the groups finances, and we remain very grateful to this family for their loyal support. SF also welcomed a donation from another family, which arranged a Sound Friends donation box to be placed in their local shop. Their donation was much appreciated. We also secured a £500 grant from NDCS which helped to cover the costs of the Christmas Pantomime. SF also received a donation of selection boxes for the Christmas party from a local councillor. Tesco also contributed via their 'Community Champion' programme, providing snacks, drinks, and tableware for the children's Christmas party.

We continue to work closely with the National Deaf Children's Society (NCDS) with whom we are affiliated, and upon whose support and guidance we depend. We also continue to work closely with Action Deaf Youth (ADY), which supports our families in number of ways, including weekly play sessions and formal sign language courses for parents. In collaboration with NCDS and ADY, we strive to improve deaf awareness in our local community, to create a more deaf friendly environment for our children and all those of the d/Deaf community.

Two of our former committee members stood down at the December 2021 AGM. We would like to thank them on behalf of Sound Friends for all their hard work during their tenure here. We would also like to thank all our supporters throughout the year for their fundraising efforts and all those who donated both time and money to help make all of these events possible.