

## **School Aid Romania**

**8 The Willows, Mullaghmore Road, Dungannon, Co Tyrone, BT70 1QH  
NI Charity Commission Number – 100954**

### **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT**

**THIS REPORT COVERS THE YEAR 1/4/18 - 31/3/19**

**Trustees who served during the year:** Andrew Clifford, Mary Hogg, JimMcQuaid, Paul Carson, Glennis Doherty, Nicola McCreesh, Kelley McKenna.

**Trustees on the date this report was approved:** Andrew Clifford, Mary Hogg, Jim McQuaid, Paul Carson, Glennis Doherty, Nicola McCreesh, Mrs Kelley McKenna

#### **Charitable Objectives:**

**Advance the education of children in Northern Ireland and Romania.**

**Provide and secure the provision of educational and recreational opportunities and practical assistance for young people and their teachers in Northern Ireland to come together in a non-sectarian context.**

**Relieve poverty and sickness among children in Romania.**

**Secure and provide, by joint ventures, material assistance to relieve the poverty and thereby improve the well-being of the young people of Romania.**

#### **Charity Activities and Review of Year**

School Aid Romania was established in 1991 and is a Northern Ireland cross community school based charity which aims to relieve poverty and deprivation in Romania. Each year Lower Sixth students from a number of schools travel to Romania over a number of weeks in January and February, spending a week in the city of Brasov. Before travelling the students are involved in a number of fund raising activities in their local communities. School Aid Romania appreciates the fundraising efforts of the students and is grateful to the continued support of their parents/guardians and local communities and businesses across Northern Ireland.

As each passenger is allowed 32kg luggage allowance the students take out a considerable amount of aid in their suitcases. This aid was sorted on the first full day in Romania. A lot of it is given to the Nearly New shop in Harman. It proves very popular with the locals. Profits from the shop help sustain the SFR houses that we support.

During their time in Romania the students visit an old people's home, children's homes, Special Needs Centres, hospitals, schools and a Kindergarden. The groups also provide food and other necessary aid to a number of very poor families in two remote villages. The staff visited the adult psychiatric in Mine Una Mai and delivered parcels of aid to the patients. Before departure, permission is obtained from the Department of Child Protection and Department of Public Health for these visits.

A number of years ago School Aid Romania purchased a minibus and subsequently a van. The minibus is used on a daily basis to transport special needs children from one of the homes that we support to the special school. The van is used to assist in the running of the three SFR homes that we support. It is also used to provide ongoing aid to the poor families in the remote villages. Both vehicles are available to us when we are in Romania. The van has been particularly useful during the winter trip. Each afternoon the students, in groups, are responsible for the purchase of aid for the following day. They load the aid into compartments in the back of the van and they are responsible for delivering the aid to the appropriate destination the next day.

Mrs Mary Hogg, from Cookstown High School travelled to Brasov in July 2018 to prepare for the winter trips. She organised a number of recreational visits for the young people in Harman. She brought with her a number of protective sheets for the Old People's Home in Sacele.

The schools involved this January and February 2019 were:

St. Patrick's College, Maghera;

Methodist College, Belfast;

The High School, Cookstown;

St. Patrick's Grammar School, Armagh;

St. Patrick's High School, Keady;

Each evening after dinner the students reflect on the events of the day and make suggestions about how their money could be spent. In February 2014 the students suggested that we invest in paving outside Casa Sf Patrick so that the two girls in the house, who are in wheelchairs, would be able to spend time outside. The work started that summer and in autumn 2018 the project was finally completed with the entire yard being paved. The paving contains the wording SAR 2014.

During reflection two of the groups suggested building a new house for Maria and her son, Gheorghe, who lived in a tumbled down house in Comona. The students were horrified at the conditions they were living in. This project was completed using local workers during the summer 2019.

Groups 2 and 3 were invited to visit the Blind Center and a treadmill was purchased.

The students suggested that we continue to purchase wood for two old ladies in Dacia and Comina.

One hundred and nineteen students and fourteen staff took part in the 2019 programme.

On the visit to Dacia School each local pupil was given a bag of food to take home. Thus larger families received a proportionally larger amount of food. The students helped the smaller children carry the food bags to their homes. We discovered an exceptionally poor family with five children living in the village and extra aid was provided to them.

Clothes, nappies and a food parcel were provided to 15 poor families in Comona village. The students carried the aid into the houses allowing them the opportunity to see into very basic homes in a poor village.

All of the young people living in Casa Irlanda are still in paid employment and are able to live a relatively independent life. They all use public transport and have their own bank accounts. Life for them has certainly changed from their time in the orphanages.

**Charity Commissions Public Benefit Requirement:** The trustees in setting the objectives and planning the activities for the year have given careful consideration to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's guidance on public benefit to ensure that the activities have helped to achieve the charity's purposes and provide benefit to the beneficiaries.

**Financial Review:**

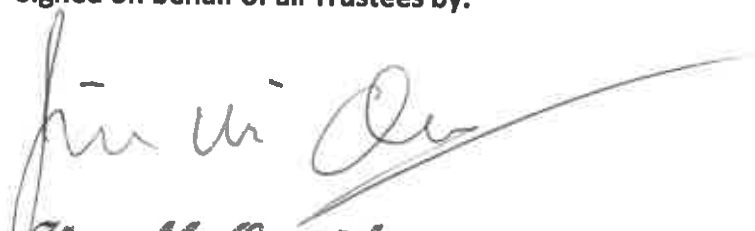
The financial report for the year was presented at the 2019 AGM and accepted and approved by the trustees. Brian Robinson Accountancy Ltd has carried out a review of these accounts and has completed an Independent examiner's report on the accounts.

Income for the year was £120,179 and expenditure for the year amounted to £99,706 giving an overall net surplus of £20,376 for the year.

At the year end funds at bank amounted to £1,749.

The Trustees can confirm that the charity does not hold any funds that were materially in deficit at the end of the year.

Signed on behalf of all Trustees by:



*Jim McQuaid*

Jim McQuaid

Date: 25/01/2019