

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 1/4/22 - 31/3/23

Trustees who served during the year: Andrew Clifford, Mary Hogg, JimMcQuaid, Paul Carson, Glennis Doherty, NicolaMcCreesh, Mrs 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 this was the first visit post COVID, Mr Andrew Clifford made an inspection visit in early November. He was happy that the trip could take place. In April Mr Jim McQuaid carried out a follow up visit. All of the places and centres visited by the students were delighted with the success of the trip involving the students.

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.

Each evening after dinner the students reflect on the events of the day and make suggestions about how their money could be spent

On the visit to Dacia School each 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.

A highlight of this year's trip was again being able to again facilitate a reunion between Vasille and his friends from Casa Sf Irlanda. Vasille was in the first group to be rescued from two Special Needs orphanages and placed in Casa Sf Maria 16 years ago. After seven years in Maria he expressed a desire to return to his family in Comona.

On the group's visit to Comona food and clothes were distributed to a number of poor families.

All of the young people living in Casa Irlanda are now 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.

The schools involved this year were:

St. Patrick's College, Maghera;

Methodist College, Belfast;

Forty students and four staff took part in the 2018 programme.

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 2023 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 £2,070 and expenditure for the year amounted to £4,415 giving an overall net deficit of £2,345 for the year.

At the year end funds at bank amounted to £4,265.

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:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jim McQuaid', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jim McQuaid

Jim McQuaid

Date: 08/05/2024