



Limerick Social Service Centre
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Building for the future



Annual Report 2018

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Limerick
Social Service
Council CLG

Comhairle Sheirbhís Sóisialta Luimnigh CLG

Our Mission Statement

Through a caring response, the LIMERICK SOCIAL SERVICE COUNCIL aims to promote the dignity and growth of individuals, families and groups.

Our Values

The LIMERICK SOCIAL SERVICE COUNCIL aims to promote the self-worth and growth of individuals, families and groups by ensuring that:

- The dignity of every person is respected
- Services are evidence based, preventative and cost effective
- Services are affordable and accessible to those in need, or free of charge where appropriate
- Services are monitored and evaluated
- We work on a partnership basis with our service users and with other agencies and professionals from the statutory, voluntary and community sectors.

Who We Are

The LSSC employs over 65 staff and is supported by over 20 volunteers. The team is divided between management, programme staff, administration and maintenance staff. The team is led by the LSSC General Manager, Brian Ryan, and overseen by the LSSC Board of Directors. The LSSC's Board of Directors provide strategic leadership for LSSC affairs in accordance with the organisation's Mission, Vision and Values and ensures accountability to the public. The Board is comprised of up to 10 members who serve voluntarily.

What We Do

The Limerick Social Service Council (LSSC) is a leading voluntary service, which has been working in Limerick communities for over five decades. The LSSC delivers its services at the LSSC Centre in Henry Street, Limerick and through outreach in a range of locations throughout Limerick City and County. Services are delivered through the CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICE, the EARLY YEARS SERVICES, the COUNSELLING SERVICE, and SERVICES FOR OLDER PEOPLE. The SOUTHSIDE CHILD and FAMILY CENTRE is currently in development. The LSSC also offers its rooms and facilities at the LSSC Centre to other agencies and organisations to enable them to serve their client groups within the community.



The work of Limerick Social Service Council over the course of 2018 has touched the lives of many Limerick Citizens—from a new resident who found a warm welcome, friendship and support for herself and her young children at a parent/toddler group to an older person who found fun, stimulation and friendship at a regular, weekly dinner for older people; from a parent in need of quality childcare they can trust to an individual in personal crisis who found support in the counselling and psychotherapy service.

LSSC operates from our premises in Henry Street, and we deliver many of our services from this location. What is less visible is the impact that the services have across the city and county of Limerick. If parents or individuals are not able to access services in Henry Street, LSSC staff travel to meet parents where they are. This is the hallmark of LSSC—services that are delivered in response to the needs of our clients and with respect for their personal dignity. This is what unites our different service strands, and it is the element of our service of which we are most proud.

The year has seen a number of significant achievements within LSSC—visible ones such as the introduction of the Community Social Work and Family Support Service and the ongoing development of the Southside Child and Family Centre along with less visible ones. These includes the dedication of staff on a daily basis to supporting their clients with care, kindness and compassion; the commitment of the service to reflecting on and enhancing practice; and the capacity for flexibility and capacity to change to meet emerging needs.

I'm delighted to share with you the work of LSSC, our achievements and some of the challenges that we have faced throughout the year. We are proud of the work we do, but, as ever, we are committed to reflecting on our work and continuously improving our effectiveness and our impact.

Mise le meas
 Martin Golden
 Chairperson of the Board

Chairman's
 Report

WELCOME

For Limerick Social Service Council, 2018 has been a year of growth, innovation and development while maintaining a commitment to our core services. Our core service pillars, Child and Family Service, Counselling and Psychotherapy Service, Early Years Service and Services for Older People have continued to deliver high-quality, client-led services and supports. We deliver services that are of the highest quality, effective and responsive to need. We continue to listen to our funders, our partners agencies and, most importantly, the individuals and families who use our services so that we can continue to deliver the best possible services and supports.

We have seen some significant changes throughout 2018, most notably the building of the Child and Family Centre on the Southside Education Campus on the Roxboro Road. We are delighted to see tangible progress of the many years of work by a range of partners and stakeholders in developing this centre, as the building itself begins to take shape. We are working closely with our partners from the Southside Education Campus - Tusla, the HSE, Limerick City and County Council, LCETB, LEDP, the Diocese of Limerick, the schools and others to bring this project to completion, and we are looking forward to the opportunities this new centre will bring to the Southside of Limerick City.

We have seen some changes in our Counselling and Psychotherapy Service - part of these changes is in ensuring that clients referred to our service receive support in as timely a manner as possible. We have been working closely with our partner agencies to ensure that clients that are in need of a service access the most appropriate one.

The year has also been challenging in a number of ways. As an organisation, we have committed to good, transparent governance and to complying with or exceeding the recommended standards. Additional reporting and demonstrations of compliance, however, require additional time across all levels of the organisation. We are committed to ensuring that front-line services are prioritized at all times, but this can be challenging.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Board of LSSC for its strong leadership, commitment to good governance and support for the work of LSSC. I would also like to thank our staff. Despite an often changing policy and funding landscape, they have remained committed to responding to their clients with warmth, skill, flexibility and compassion. I would like to thank our funding agencies and partners for working with us to strengthen and enhance our work. Finally, I would like to thank the children, parents, individuals, families and communities who have accessed the services of LSSC. It is they who shape and give meaning to what we do and why we do it.



Mise le meas,
Brian Ryan, LSSC General Manager



Staff of LSSC's Child and Family Service at the Family Fun Day



LSSC Family Fun Day



LSSC Family Fun Day



At the Introduction to the Community Social Work and Family Support Service and the Practice Seminar with Professor Brid Featherstone



Community Mothers and clients at the conclusion of a successful Incredible Years Programme.



Panelists Terese Crawford, LCETB, Sean Lynch, LSSC, Mick Parry and Professor Brid Featherstone, University of Huddersfield.



Sandra Burke, TPSP Coordinator, and Caitlin McCreesh, a former client of the service, after presenting at the National Peri-Natal Mental Health Conference in December



Comhairle Sheirbhís Sóisialta Luimnigh CLG

Invitation

Limerick Social Service Council CLG
Comhairle Sheirbhís Sóisialta Luimnigh CLG

Limerick Social Service Council invites you to join us for a **Practice Seminar** with **Professor Brid Featherstone** on the topic of **Protecting children and supporting families: A social model** and an introduction to LSSC's Community Social Work and Family Support Service.

Date: Friday, November 23rd
Time: 9:30am - 1:00pm with presentations beginning at 10:00am
Location: Clayton Hotel, St. James's Quay, Limerick

RSVP TO: community@lsscc.ie or at www.lsscc.ie by Friday 14th November

This is a Continuous Professional Development event.

LSSC events in 2018...

Snapshot: The Year in Numbers

Below is a synopsis of the numbers of clients that each part of the service supported over the past year. We provide services on an individual and group basis; some supports are long-term and some may just be a few meetings.

Child and Family Service:

Community Social Work and Family Support

Number of Referrals:	Number of Families Receiving a Service:	Number of Client Meeting/ Contacts:	Number of Parenting Programmes Delivered:	Number of Parents Completing the Programmes:	Number of Meitheals as Lead Practitioner:	Number of Drop-Ins:
167	156	444	2	22	8	49

Teen Parent Support Programme

Number of Referrals:	Number of Families Receiving a Service:	Number of Client Meetings/ Contacts:	Number of Parenting Programmes Delivered:	Number of Parents Completing the Programme:	Number of Parenting Groups Weekly (Parent and Toddler Group)	Average Number of Parents Attending the Parent and Toddler Group:
56	85	506	3	23	1	10

Number of Parent Support Workshops Delivered:	Number of Parents Attending:	Number of Meitheals as Lead Practitioner:	Number of Drop-Ins:
6	59	7	85

Family Advocacy Service

Number of Referrals:	Number of Families Receiving a Service:	Number of Client Meetings/ Contacts:	Number of Drop-Ins:
32	57	237	10

Community Mothers

Number of Referrals:	Number of Families Receiving a Service:	Number of Client Meetings/ Contacts:	Number of Parenting Programmes Delivered:	Number of Parents Completing the Programme:	Number of Parenting Groups weekly (Parent and Toddler Group)	Number of Parents Attending the Parent and Toddler Group:
100	91	408	3	22	6	11
Number of Parent Support Workshops Delivered:	Number of Parents Attending:					
18	173					

Family Welfare Conferencing Service

Number of Referrals:	Number of Families Receiving a Service:	Number of Client Meetings/ Contacts:
20	20	106



Relationships and Sexual Health Programme:

Number of Referrals: 40	Number of Families Receiving a Service: 40	Number of Client Contacts: 233	Number of Parenting Programme: 7	Number of Parents Completing the Programme: 70	Number of Parenting Groups Delivered: 1 with 11 sessions	Number of Parents Attending Groups: 75
40	40	233	7	70	11	75
Number of Programmes for Young People:	Numbers Completing the Programmes:					
4	31					

Counselling and Psychotherapy Service

Number of Referrals:	Number of Client Contacts/Sessions:
836	5,385



Early Years' Service

Baby Room: 6 children from 6-18 months	Toddler Room: 22 children from 18 months-3 years	Pre-School: 36 children attend on a full-time basis and 14 children attend on a sessional basis
6	22	14



Traveller Health Advocacy Programme

Traveller Health Advocacy Programme Number of Advocates:	Number of Health Assistants:	Number of Families Supported:	Number of Client Contacts:
4	2	150	944

Older Person's Service

Number of Home/Care Facility Vists:	Number of Groups: 3 groups/week	Number Attending Groups: Approx. 100/week
580	3	100



COUNSELLING AND PSYCHOTHERAPY SERVICE

The LSSC Counselling and Psychotherapy Service provides counselling and psychotherapy to adult and adolescent clients across Limerick City and County.

The service supports people who may be struggling with personal, emotional or mental health difficulties, and works with clients so that they can understand the root causes of challenging circumstances, manage difficult situations and distress, develop positive, healthy coping mechanisms and live happier lives. The LSSC Counsellors and Psychotherapists support clients to explore their life situations in a confidential, safe, compassionate and non-judgmental environment.

LSSC's Counselling and Psychotherapy Service is a member of the Association for Agency-based Counselling and Psychotherapy in Ireland (AACPI). All staff undergo stringent pre-employment assessments to ensure that they meet LSSC and

professional standards. LSSC ensures that each staff member is professionally qualified and eligible for accreditation with the Irish Council for Psychotherapy (ICP). Staff are also required to undertake regular professional supervision of their practice, which ensures that staff continue to work to the highest professional standards.

The Counselling and Psychotherapy Service received 836 overall referrals during 2018, down slightly on last year's figures. The service offered 5,385 sessions to adult and adolescent clients during 2018 with an attendance rate of 82%.

The main source of referrals in 2018 were self-referrals, accounting for 384 of the total referrals. Next were referrals from the HSE's Primary Community and Continuing Care (PCCC) service, which accounted for 249 of the 836 total referrals. There were 193 referrals from Tusla and Tusla funded agencies

in 2018, 86 of whom were adolescents. Other organisations such as the Probation Service, the HSE Adult Mental Health Service, Focus Ireland, and Novas also referred clients to the service during the year.

The Adolescent Psychotherapy Service recorded a 20% increase in referrals compared to 2018, with 86 young people being referred to the service. The service provided over 450 sessions to these young people, all delivered by psychotherapists with special training in Adolescent Psychotherapy. Young people being referred to the service are prioritised and are seen as soon as possible. Among the main presenting issues for this cohort of clients were anxiety, self-harm, relationships and family issues, and issues with school.

New Developments

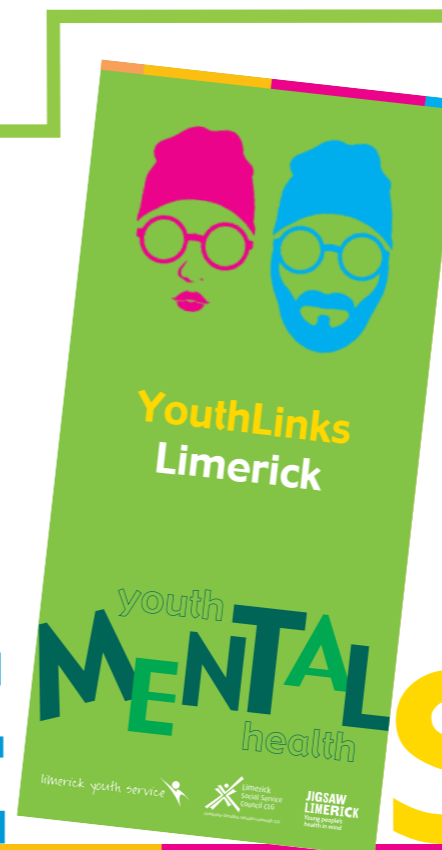


Collaboration and Partnership

The LSSC Counselling and Psychotherapy Service began a process of collaboration with Limerick Youth Service and Jigsaw to improve the coordination of mental health services for young people in Limerick. An information leaflet was developed to provide information on each of the services and to clarify the referral process among the three services, so that young people in need of a mental health service are referred to the appropriate agency. This leaflet will be disseminated among various referring agencies. The three services will continue to collaborate during 2019 to ensure that the needs of young people are met in the best possible way with regards to mental health services in Limerick.

Commitment to Quality Practice

The HSE carried out a clinical governance review of the Counselling and Psychotherapy service in 2018. Following this review, which highlighted the high quality of service being delivered, the LSSC Counselling and Psychotherapy Service implemented a number of changes to ensure that the service continues to grow and develop according to guidelines for best practice. Chief among these changes was the appointment of a clinical supervisor to ensure that the highest levels of professional support are available to therapists working within the service, which in turn will ensure the best client outcomes can be achieved. The LSSC Counselling and Psychotherapy Service will continue to work in 2019 to ensure that the recommendations in the HSE report are implemented.



THE EARLY YEARS SERVICES

The LSSC Early Years Service offers a full day Early Years Service and a Pre-school Service five days a week.

The Service is committed to providing the highest quality childcare for babies and young children. The Early Years Service has a very highly qualified, committed staff who are committed to ongoing professional development so that they can provide the highest standard of care and early education. All staff members are trained in Early Childhood Care and Education to provide a happy, positive, nurturing learning and care environment that is led by the interests and needs of the children and focuses on play.

The LSSC Early Years Services is committed to the highest standards of quality, and the service is delivered in line with Síolta Quality Standards and the Aistear Curriculum Framework. The service gained Validation in Síolta Standards, the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education, which are designed to support quality across all aspects of practice in early childhood care and education settings. This is a significant achievement and underlines the ongoing commitment to quality provision.

The service works in close partnership with parents and is committed to supporting positive transitions from the home to the service, between each of the different rooms and from the pre-school to primary school. Staff members recognise that parents are the first and most important educators of their children and work to support the home/early years service connections.

Most of our families live in the local area of the city centre with some travelling to the city for work or study. We work closely with the LSSC Child and Family Service, and some of our families are referred through the Teen Parent Support Programme, Community Mothers or the Community Social Work and Family Support Service.

The Early Years Service is almost always operating at full capacity with a waiting list of families wishing to use the service.



A full-time preschool service was piloted in the preschool room this year in response to the needs of families. The full-time service started with eight children and proved very successful. This service will be provided again in 2019 as there is a demand from the families using the service.

The Early Years Service is working to incorporate more natural materials into the room such as sticks and shells and using actual dishes and cutlery in the home corner. This gives the children more real world experiences as they take part in the activities each day. This also helps them as they prepare their own snack each day by buttering their bread and pouring their own drinks. We hope to start making the rest of the service a more natural environment and cutting down on our use of plastic over the coming year.

We have been working hard to improve our outdoor area this year and have made some changes by planting flowers with the children and making outdoor play equipment which

incorporates risk taking as part of the play. We have been able to make our outdoor equipment from wood and tyres which are very tactile materials that the children enjoy using.

Three staff members of the Early Years Service returned to education to do the final year of their degree while working, which is a fantastic achievement. They are due to complete their degrees in the summer of 2019. We have also had two staff members complete their Marte Meo Practitioner level with the support of ABC Start Right. This is a way of working with children to find their strengths and help them to communicate and progress at their level. This brings to 5 the number of people in our service who have received this training.

New Developments

LSSC's Child and Family Service provides a range of services, support, programmes and approaches to support and enhance relationships within families and to improve outcomes for children. We work in partnership with families from a strength-based perspective. Our staff members work with parents and children to identify what is working well within the family and what issues they have or changes they would like to make. This forms the basis of a shared plan to address the identified issues.

We work with families across Limerick City and County and with children of all ages from the ante-natal period up to the age of 18. We support the holistic needs of families - from supporting parents to navigate housing and social welfare systems; to direct work with parents and children to help build positive relationships and communication; to supporting families to access and engage in social supports such as parent and toddler groups. The CFS works closely in partnership with the Early Years and Counselling and Psychotherapy Services in LSSC, the Early Years Service and a range of partner agencies to best meet the needs of the families accessing our service.

We know that children need strong family and community relationships to develop and thrive. The core element of our work, therefore, is supporting strong relationships—relationships between our practitioners and the family members and among family members. Below is an overview of the key services that are part of the Child and Family Service:



THE CHILD & FAMILY SERVICE



Community Social Work and Family Support

The Community Social Work and Family Support Service consists of professionally qualified social workers and family support workers. They maintain an active caseload and work closely with other services, externally, as well as those within LSSC.

This work is done through home visits, centre-based work and phone contact. Targeted group interventions and workshops are also facilitated.

As Designated Liaison Persons for the entire LSSC, the Community Social Workers support staff who have concerns regarding child safeguarding.

Key Achievements in 2018

- In November 2018, the Community Social Work and Family Support Service was launched as part of a Practice Seminar organised by the Community Social Work and Family Support Team, with a keynote address by Professor Brid Featherstone, Head of Department (Behavioural and Social Sciences), University of

Huddersfield and Associate Director, Centre for Applied Childhood, Youth and Family Research, School of Human and Health Services.

- The development of Community Social Work has had an impact in three key areas: high quality intervention for families; capacity building and support for staff; enhanced engagement with external agencies
- Completion of the Child Safeguarding Policies and Procedures, which provides comprehensive information and support for all LSSC staff in relation to child safeguarding
- Two Parents Plus Programme in Newcastle West were delivered in partnership with the ISPC. This is a successful example of the effectiveness of interagency partnership in meeting the needs of clients across Limerick City and County.

Teen Parent Support Programme

The Teen Parent Support Programme (TPSP) is a targeted community-based service that offers confidential support to

young people who are pregnant or who are parents. Support is also available to the young person's partner and members of their extended families.

TPSP Limerick is part of the National Teen Parents Support Programme. Support is provided through the provision of one to one home visits and centre-based work; a range of supports for the young parent to remain in education; and provision of group work programmes to support parents in their parenting role and in their own personal development. These include a weekly parent and toddler group, the City Slickers Programme, the Mellow Bumps Ante-Natal Programme and other post-natal supports.

Key Achievements in 2018

- A total of 52 young people were supported to access full-time and part-time education through funding provided under the School Completion Programme Funding
- Two 10 week City Slickers Programmes were delivered in Summer and Winter 2018 with a total of 20 parents and 24 children participating

- 35 young Parents and 40 Children attended the TPSP Parent and Toddler Group throughout 2018 with an average weekly attendance of 10 parents & Babies/Toddlers
- Two staff members were trained in the ante-natal Mellow Bumps programme, which has enhanced the capacity of the service to provide support at all stages of pregnancy and new parenthood
- The TPSP Coordinator gave a presentation on the TPSP and Community Mothers Service at the annual Mid-West Peri-Natal Mental Health Conference. This was delivered in partnership with a previous client of the service and was very well received.

Community Mothers

The Community Mothers Programme is a home visiting service for families with new babies and young children. The programme aims to encourage parents to enjoy participating more fully in their child's life. Community Mothers visit parents in their home during the early years (generally up to the age of three) to offer non-directive information on parenting, child development and local services and supports. Community Mothers support positive parent/child relationships. Community Mothers also facilitate Baby/Toddler/ Parent Groups, weaning workshops, baby massage and baby reflexology programmes, Incredible Years Programmes and the Mellow

Bumps Ante-Natal Programme.

Key Achievements in 2018

- The Community Mothers continue to work closely in partnership with ABC Start Right with regard to service delivery, training and quality improvement. With the support of ABC Start Right, Community Mothers have completed Marte Meo and Circle of Security Training
- One Community Mother completed Mellow Bumps training, which has enhanced the capacity of the service to provide support at all stages of pregnancy and new parenthood.
- The Community Mothers Programme continues to offer

One of the highlights of the year for the Child and Family Service was the second annual Family Fun Day, held on our grounds in July. All the CFS staff worked together to plan the day, which welcomed approximately 80 families, including clients of our service and many of our neighbours on Henry Street, to a day of fun including the mobile farm, games and stories and some pampering for parents. In addition, the Child and Family Service finalised a new referral form and consent forms, which are fully in line with GDPR but are also user-friendly and accessible. The referral form is available on-line.

universal, group programmes such as Parent/Baby/Toddler Groups, weaning workshops, Incredible Years Programmes, baby massage and baby reflexology as well as more targeted support through the Home Visiting Service.

- LSSC's Community Mothers Programme is participating in a National Review of the Community Mothers Programme being undertaken by the Katherine Howard Foundation with support from the Community Foundation Ireland.

Relationships and Sexual Health Programme

The Relationships and Sexual Health Programme aims to increase parental capacity to communicate with their teenage children in the area of relationships and sexual health. The Programme also supports young people with additional life skills to support the existing Social Health and Personal Development Programme within their school or training centres and to incorporate communication skills, self-esteem and confidence-building skills to the area of relationships and sexual health. The Programme provides a forum for parents who had previously completed a Relationships and Sexual Health Parenting Programme, to meet and develop peer support networks and share their experiences regarding the parenting of their teenage

children. It also links parents with other services for additional supports in the area of sexual health, if required.

Key Achievements in 2018

- Collaborative work with The National Learning Network in delivering a 6 week Relationship and Sexual Health Programme to their young learners
- Development of a resource package on relationships and sexual health for working with Young Adults with Additional Intellectual needs
- Collaborative work with Limerick Youth Service in setting up a 6 week Relationship and Sexual Health Programme for young people
- With Support from Tusla Seed Funding for Youth Participation, a project was undertaken to explore what young people would like to see in their sexual health and relationships education. This was done in collaboration with LIT Social Care students.
- Workshops on relationships and sexual health were held with the Limerick Traveller Health Advocacy Programme.

Family Advocacy Service

The Family Advocacy Service is a confidential and independent service for parents in Limerick who have children who are either in care or in the process of being taken in to the care of the State. The Service offers support to parents to continue involvement with their children while they are in care and assists them to fully participate in Child in Care reviews and child protection case conferences. The Family Advocacy Service provides one to one and group support through a weekly support group for parents of children in care.

Key Achievements in 2018

- The Family Advocacy Service Worker and a Community Social Worker presented a workshop on Community Social Work and Advocacy to students in UCC.
- The same team also presented research they conducted on the experiences of parents with children in care in a paper entitled, *Stability, and for whom? Does the birth parent have a role in contributing to the placement stability of their child(ren) in foster care?*, at the Irish Foster Carer's Association (IFCA), which was held in Limerick in November.
- The Family Advocacy Worker has been actively engaged in Tusla's Parent Participation Seed Funding project and has supported parents around engagements in this.

Family Welfare Conference Service

The Family Welfare Conference Service (FWC) is a specialised service that supports family members to participate in the Family Welfare Conference process and plans for their children. It brings together as many family members as possible, along with the child where appropriate, to develop a family support plan in the best interests of the child. The Family Welfare Conference Coordinator meets each member of the family separately in advance of the FWC to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to express their views.

Under the Children's Act, 2001, Child Protection Services are obliged to request that a FWC is convened if it is believed that a child or young person may be in need of a Special Care Placement. FWCs may also be requested through the Courts. The FWC is also utilised by Tusla Social Workers where child protection or welfare concerns exist within families or when broad family support is being sought.

Key Achievements in 2018

- 15 Family Welfare Conferences were prepared and convened in respect of 25 children.
- Ongoing participation in the Signs of Safety follow-up training days and active use of Signs of Safety in practice
- The LSSC Family Welfare

Conference Coordinator was nominated by FWC colleagues to be part of a core group representing national FWC services regarding new developments in Special Care legislation and guidance.

Family Support Initiative

The main objective of the FSI is to assist and support local residents in Southside Regeneration areas to access the large and diverse range of services being provided by a significant number of statutory agencies, voluntary organisations and community based groups. The Family Support Initiative works to identify needs and to support and connect individuals to services as appropriate. The Initiative is located in a number of communities in Limerick's Regeneration areas covering Southill and Ballinacurra Weston.

Key Achievements in 2018

- Development of the Model of Engagement and Support for FSI
- Establishment of Community Drop-in Clinics in Ballinacurra Weston
- Support for and collaboration in a range of community activities and structures in the southside.

Supervised Access

The Supervised Access Service supports children in care to have contact with their parents,

siblings and other family members. The service facilitates access referrals from Tusla, Child and Family Agency.

Key Achievements in 2018

- Continued positive engagement and support for access for a large number of children in care and their families.

Child and Family Service

New Developments

- One of the most significant new developments for the Child and Family Service was the establishment of the Community Social Work and Family Support Service
- The CFS is working on the development of a database and case management system to support both effective case management and reporting requirements. This will also support the service to regularly review and monitor our impact
- The CFS is also working to develop streamlined referral processes that ensure that all clients are seen as quickly and efficiently as possible while maintaining our commitment to providing high quality and responsive support to clients.



The Child and Family Service maintains a continued commitment of ongoing learning, training and capacity building of staff across all service areas to ensure that the service has a highly qualified staff with the skills to continuously reflect on and improve practice.

The Child and Family Service is also developing a new case management system, which will ensure that records are held safely and securely, will support effective and efficient management of cases and will assist with data collection and analysis.

TRAVELLER HEALTH ADVOCACY

Limerick City Traveller Health Advocacy Programme (THAP) has been operating since 2013 in conjunction with the Traveller Health Unit within the HSE. It was developed in response to findings from the 2010 All Ireland Traveller Health Study which highlighted significant health inequalities experienced by the Traveller community in Ireland. The overall aim of the THAP is to improve the health status of Travellers in Limerick City.

In 2018 THAP staff consisted of a part time Co-Ordinator, 4 part time trained Traveller Health Advocates and 2 part time Health Assistants. The team provided health information door to door to around 150 families living primarily on halting sites in and around the City using a peer education and community development approach.

Key Achievements in 2018

- A total of 944 individual contacts were made with Travellers in Limerick City in 2018 in the delivery of health initiatives.
- THAP works on a number of health issues but 3 key Priority Areas are:-
 - DIABETES
 - CARDIOVASCULAR HEALTH
 - MENTAL HEALTH.
- THAP supported a Step Challenge among members of the travelling community to support positive heart health and Diabetes Awareness Mornings where there was a high turnout of Traveller Men
- To support mental health, THAP helped design Traveller friendly leaflets with Pieta House about SUICIDE PREVENTION and information on Services available and then delivered them on site to 89 individuals
- THAP promoted Cancer Screening programmes including cervical, bowel and breast.



New Developments

A wide range of Inter agency work will continue throughout 2019 focusing on the improvement of Traveller Health and better uptake of services in Limerick City.

OLDER PERSON'S SERVICES

LSSC's Services for Older Person's works to support the well-being of older people by providing opportunities for them to enjoy their leisure time, build social networks and participate in community activities. The service operates in Southill, St. Mary's Parish and Our Lady Of Lourdes. In addition, a range of classes are provided in Limerick Social Service Council on Henry Street.

The service is led by the needs of its clients and develops programmes and activities in line with what participants would like. The Service organised a number of recreational and social activities for older people in the community and operates through a number of support groups, community education initiatives and through outreach services on a one-to-one basis or in a family context.

There is an extensive programme of visits to older people in their homes, in hospitals and in other care settings. Service users are linked to other agencies as needs arise and counselling is offered through the LSSC Counselling Service.

The Service also offers a range of practical information and advice, including assistance with access to services, form filling and general administration that may be challenging for some older people.

Key Achievements in 2018

580

home or care facility visits

1,584

home cooked dinners provided for 33 people over 48 weeks

60

support visits to groups for older people

19

social events organised for older people in Southill including trips to Galway and Knock, Tea Dances, Halloween and Christmas parties and a range of other social events.

Provision of a range of further learning opportunities for older people.

New Developments

- To continue to promote greater participation by older people in society, providing social outlets and opportunities
- To continue to provide opportunities for learning and participation through offering classes in arts and craft, conversational Irish, IT skills and local history
- To continue to provide companion services to relieve loneliness and increase social connections through home visits, regular phone calls, outings and social groups
- To continue to develop strategic partnerships to enhance access to supports and resources for older people.



What our service users say

As part of ongoing service improvement and quality assurance, we regularly ask for feedback from our clients. Below is a snapshot of what some of them had to say.

"Myself and my son got brilliant support from the workers in LSSC over the past few months. We both also got counselling, and it has had a brilliant effect on us both."

"It was easy to talk to the people from the Social Service Centre. I felt listened to. My views and worries are taken seriously. The appointments are at a convenient time and are accommodated for my needs."

"When I came in, I was asked if I wanted a cup of tea. That made me feel very welcome."

"I cannot praise my worker at LSSC enough. He has gone above and beyond to help our family when we needed it most. We also worked with a counsellor, who has done fantastic work with our son."

"Very positive counselling sessions, advocacy, parenting programmes - all the above have made me a better parent today. I can now ask for help. These services have really helped to support my family."

"I felt the people who dealt with me and my problems really listened."

"The understanding and guidance given to me reassured me as a parent. The support helped me to see how to react in difficult situations at home."

"The support, advice and guidance I received along with my family was crucial in very difficult times. The workers went above and beyond and continue to do so."

"I was finally listened to and believed, I started my road to recovery".

"A massive thanks to my counsellor and the team. I very much appreciate everything you have done for me".

"I was extremely nervous and did not know what to expect, but I can honestly say it was the best experience ever and I have overcome so much and am so proud of myself".

"I found my counsellor was fantastic. She knew exactly what I needed and gave it to me 100% and more".

"I found my counsellor to be very caring and considerate".

"He helped me through some difficult situations and helped me cope when things were tough, I thank him and all the counselling team sincerely."

"My three babies love coming to LSSC Early Years Service, a professional and friendly service with plenty of activities each day for the children."

"Our daughter attends the pre-school service in Henry Street and absolutely loves it. Management and all the team are friendly, kind and attentive. It gives us great satisfaction and assurance that my little girl is well looked after and safe. Kids are always busy there, they constantly learning and experiencing something new. She loves going to pre-school each morning and she would like to be a teacher when she will grow up, which says it all."

"A fantastic service, my child loves it here, I feel like the staff practically raised her with me."

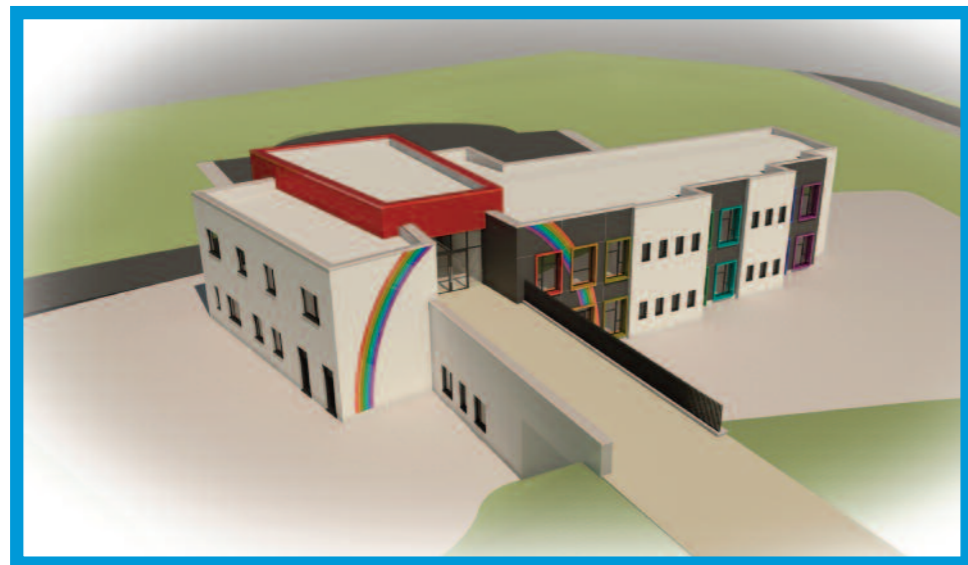
"My child loves coming in here and even at the weekend she wants to come to pre-school and the staff are great."

Thank you...

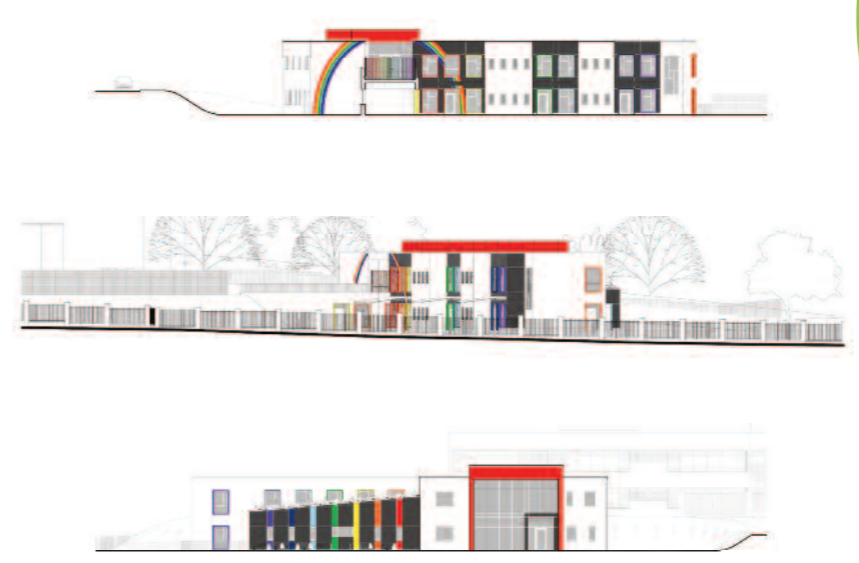
Looking to the Future: New Developments for 2019

Limerick Social Service Council, in partnership with Limerick City and County Council, Tusla, the Diocese of Limerick, HSE, LCETB, DES, LEDP and schools have been working together to develop a Child and Family Centre on the Southside Education Campus as an integrated, high-quality centre of early learning and care (ELC) and family support. The Child and Family Centre is located on the Southside Education Campus and will work within the current ethos of the campus: schools, statutory, community and voluntary services working in an integrated way to improve outcomes for children and families in the area. There are currently two schools (Le Chéile and Gaelscoil Sheirse Clancy) as well as a number of community services including Breakfast Clubs and After-school clubs being delivered on site.

In 2018, significant work was achieved in both the building of the Child and Family Centre and the development of the Service Model. LSSC would like to thank all of the partner agencies for their support and dedication in developing this exciting initiative. LSSC looks forward to welcoming children, parents, members of the Southside community and our partner agencies to the Centre in 2019.



Southside Child & Family Centre



Supporting People and Community through Partnerships

A core part of the work of LSSC is working in partnership with other agencies to deliver our services. These include government agencies and departments, schools, colleges of further education, universities, community and voluntary organisations, community centres, hospitals, GPs, philanthropic organisations. These organisations have provided a range of supports - funding, expertise, collaborative delivery - that has enhanced our ability to meet the needs of our clients. We would like to take this opportunity to thank our funders, in particular, and all of our partner organisations for their significant levels of support over the past year. We look forward to ongoing engagement with all of the services.

LSSC Funders and Partners:

Tusla, Child and Family Agency
Health Service Executive
Pobal
Limerick City and County Council
Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board
PAUL Partnership:
- ABC Start Right
- Incredible Years

Limerick Childcare Committee
Department of Children and Youth Affairs
Department of Education and Skills
Department of Social Protection

Adapt Services
Age and Opportunity (Dublin)
Barnardos
Diocese of Limerick
Focus Ireland
Irish Foster Carer's Association
Limerick Institute of Technology
Community Law and Mediation

Doras Luimni
Limerick College of Further Education
Limerick Enterprise Development Park (LEDP)
Limerick Youth Service
Mary Immaculate College
Mid-West Simon Community
Novas
The Associated Charities Trust
University of Limerick
University Hospital Limerick
University Maternity Hospital, Limerick
Treoir

Supporting People & Communities Through Partnerships

In addition, staff across Limerick Social Service Council support a number of inter-agency initiatives including the Child and Family Centre Consortium, ABC Start Right, the Limerick Homeless Alliance, Parenting Limerick, Tusla's Parenting Support Champion Initiative, the Incredible Years Limerick Management Group, the Limerick Infant Mental Health Group and the Youth Housing Allocation Group.

LSSC collaborates regularly with other agencies in the delivery of programmes and workshops. Partners include Tusla, HSE officers such as PHNs, the Child and Family Centre and Medical Social Workers, Barnardos, ABC Start Right and ISPCC.

Staff in the Community Social Work and Family Support Service and Teen Parent Support Programme are leading on a number of Meitheals and actively engaging with other agencies to support families to achieve the outcomes identified through the Meitheal Process. Staff also participate actively in Family Welfare, Child Protection and Children in Care conferences, meetings and reviews as required.

Services that Aailed of The LSSC Centre In 2018

During 2018, LSSC offered its facilities to the Tusla Aftercare Service, HSE Public Health Nursing Clinics, Limerick Community Law and Mediation Service, Brainwave Ireland and EPIC (Empowering Children in Care). In addition, a number of other organisations, agencies and groups availed of the Centre to deliver programmes, consultations and meetings with clients. These included the following:

- ACOA (Adult Children of Alcoholics)
- Alcoholics Anonymous
- An-Anon
- AWARE
- Bruree House
- Cancer Support
- Diocesan Lourdes Pilgrimage Office
- Emergency Response Group
- Gam-Anon
- Narcotics Anonymous
- Overeaters Anonymous
- SHINE



Working Together for Better Lives

A special thank you to our staff, volunteers, Board, partners and donors - with your help and commitment, the LSSC will continue to work together for better lives for the children, young people, adults, families and communities of Limerick.