



Sligo Family Resource Centre

Annual Report 2017

<https://www.facebook.com/SligoFamilyResourceCentre>
www.sligofamilyresourcecentre.org

Introduction

Sligo Family Resource Centre (FRC) has been in operation since 1995. Based at 49 The Mall, Sligo this FRC is one of 106 FRCs under the FSA Programme based throughout the country.

Mission of Sligo FRC is to:

support individuals, families and communities without discrimination and in a warm, caring and open environment by identifying changing needs and responding to those needs positively.

The FRC is currently on the second year of its three year strategic plan 2015-2017 which is designed to achieve the following objectives all of which are linked to the Túsla Child and Family Agency National Programme Outcomes: that parents and children:

1. Are active and healthy, with positive physical and mental wellbeing.
2. Are achieving their full potential in all areas of learning and development.
3. Are safe and protected from harm.
4. Have economic security and opportunity.
5. Are connected, respected and contributing to their world.

The Sligo FRC outcomes are as follows:

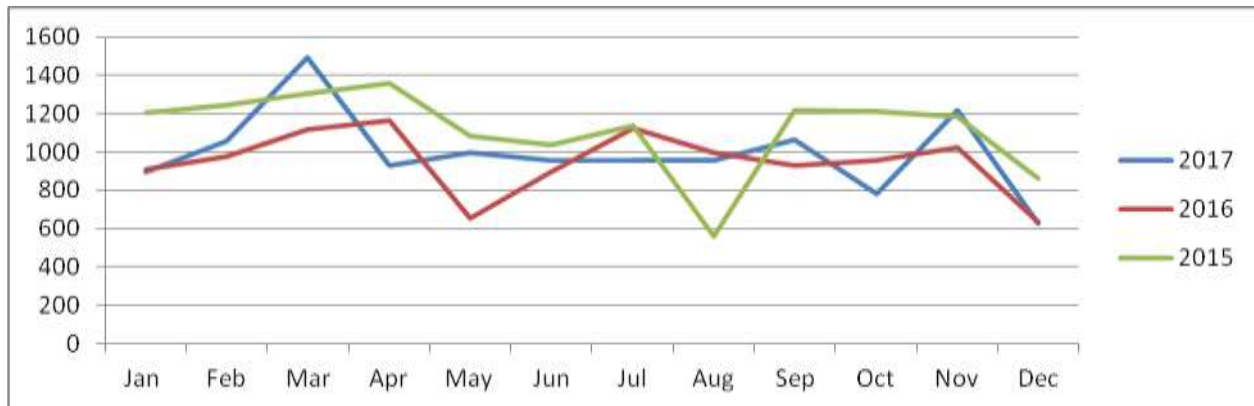
- That individuals, families and groups have access to a range of supports and services that enable and promote participation in society
- That people actively avail of a variety of community-based learning and development opportunities
- That children's holistic development is nourished in a safe, comfortable and fun environment.
- That individuals and families are supported in times of need
- That minority individuals and groups are empowered to participate in their wider community

2017 was another busy year in the Sligo FRC. We had an increase in funding for our Intercultural work and started a new Project working with older people in our community. We had a few changes in staff and an increase in the number of volunteers working in the FRC. Meanwhile we continued to work with 30-35 families each week, six adults with disabilities on a one to one basis, up to 12 in the Thursday Club and 25 in the countess Café.

A statistical analysis of every aspect of Sligo FRC's work is made annually through the FRC's SPEAK (Strategic Planning Education and Knowledge) recording system. This annual report is intended to give you a flavour of the various events and activities engaged by the FRC in 2017.

Information and Services

Sligo FRC welcomes any member of the community to avail of its programmes and services and/or to find out more about other services or opportunities in Sligo. Below is an indication of the footfall in the FRC over the past three years 2015, 2016 and 2017.



Total in 2017 was 11,992 of which 50% were women, 32% children and 18% men.

These figures only include the people who come into the FRC, however, and do not include the outreach work carried out by the FRC staff in the family support service throughout Counties Sligo and Leitrim, support to adults with learning disabilities service including the Countess Café and Cregg House, the Intercultural Events (the Giloolley Hall and Model Niland in March and November

2017), the work with older people (Glass House 01 Dec 2017) and the family fun event Sligo Woodland School August 2017. These numbers would increase our numbers by an additional 500.

Information is provided through a selection of leaflets, fliers, posters and websites at the front office. Staff can respond to a range of queries through the bank of knowledge built up in reception. **Administrative support** such as photocopying and printing is also available at the Centre.

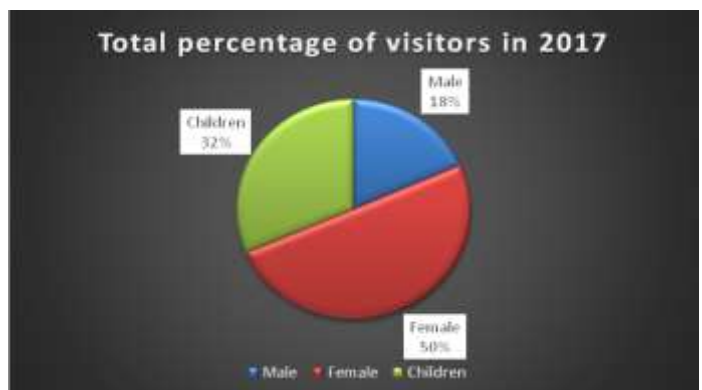
The **Sitting Room** provides respite for busy parents and carers who can drop in to comfortable facilities for a bit of time out and a cup of tea. Children can play or read and adults can meet to chat or feed a baby. The **Outdoor Garden/Play area** offers excellent play opportunities and a good meeting point for parents, particularly those who have attended groups or **Footprints Crèche**. Rooms for **Access** visits are also available and these families can avail of all the facilities outlined as part of these visits.

Meeting rooms at the Centre are available for hire at subsidised rates to facilitate community groups and organisations to meet. This year Sligo *Lend A Hand* group took a room for long term use.

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Parent Support Initiatives

Parents Plus Early Years parenting programme for parents was offered to parents in January 2017 – nine parents attended. In the autumn, seven staff members were trained in Parents Plus Early Years Programme, Children's Programme and Parenting when Separated. These programmes will be rolled out on a one to one basis with parents.



Parent Support Champions is a Tusla Parenting Support Strategy whose aim is to promote seven general messages and the 50 key messages for parents within the Parenting24seven initiative. There are 5 PSCs in Sligo/Leitrim and the Sligo FRC manager is one of these. To date they have established a Facebook page to disseminate information on parenting in the two counties and the Make One Change initiative in 10 of the schools.



Parent Hub – Sligo FRC received funding from the National Lottery to have a drop-in parenting support clinic one morning a week – this will come into effect in 2018.

The **Danú Birth Parent Support Group** has been in operation for the past 12 years and continues to be facilitated by Sligo FRC manager and co-facilitator Carmel McNamee. Five new women joined the group this year and the attendance remains at about 8-10 women per meeting. In May we attended the discussion on the Adoption (Information and Tracing) Bill 2016 in the offices of the Adoption Authority attended by Minister Katherine Zappone and Philomena Lee. One of the women from the group gave a presentation at this event.

Seperated Dads group – this is a group of 4-6 fathers who meet every 2 weeks. The FRC secured ETB funding for a facilitator for the first half of the year for them – the FRC manager took over the facilitation when the funding expired.

Parents of children with dyslexia continues with three meetings in 2017 plus a workshop in April with a facilitator Paula Horan Dyslexia Connection Centre Ireland based in Mullingar. This was funded by Sligo Education Centre and 19 parents attended. The afterschool classes for children with dyslexia continued throughout 2017 with two teachers from Mercy Primary running the classes. Parents pay for this service and there was no subsidy for this year.

The **Adoptive Parents Group** no longer meet formally but they have a WhatsApp group between through which they communicate. We continue to disseminate information by email to this group. In May

Sligo FRC ran one **Summer Camps** during July for 12 children aged 4-6 years. In August we had a family fun morning with Sligo Woodlands School – thirteen families took part.

In August we had a **Family Fun Day** in Cleveragh with the Sligo Woodlands School. Thirteen families attended this event including many from the new communities.



The **International Day of the Child** 01 June 2017 was celebrated with a workshop in Nazereth House in which the FRC manager gave a presentation on Parents Plus parenting programme to service providers.

Family Support Service Including Footprints Drop-in Crèche

The **Family Support Service** including Footprints crèche (below) is funded by Tusla Partnership Prevention and Family Support PPFs office and Dept of Social Protection. In 2017 it provided home based targeted family support to families in all of counties Sligo and Leitrim (Child and Family Network Areas 1, 2 and 3) up to the end of May. Sligo FRC was asked by PPFs to work only in CFSN areas 2 and 3 and in December we

were informed that from 2018 we would work only in CFSN area 1 as there are now other services offering family support in the CFSN areas 1 and 3.

Footprints Crèche is a service open to all families in Sligo and the surrounding area. It provides sessional care for up to 10 children up to 6 years of age on a once off or continuous agreed basis to facilitate parents to attend appointments, training, counselling etc.

In 2017, Footprints was awarded the **Healthy Ireland Smart Start Award** a preschool health promotion programme. We also secured funding to enhance the **Play Area** in the back garden from the Department of children and Youth Affairs capital grants.

Last year 76 children from 67 families used the crèche. Footprints offers parents Community Childcare Subvention. Staff members have built strong links over the years with key referral agencies to ensure families with particular needs can access the crèche service.

Community based education, training and social integration opportunities

Sligo FRC works with May Sligo Leitrim Education and Training Board to provide a variety of training opportunities in the community. The **Parent and Toddler Drama** with Deirdre Gaule continues every Tuesday morning, which consists of a programme of music and drama to develop toddlers' language and movement. This has been running in the FRC for over 10 years now. Associated with the drama group is the **annual Christmas party** with Santa and his helpers in December.

During the year the MSL ETB funded **Sewing and Craft Classes**.

Services to Adult with a Learning Disability

Sligo FRC now has six part-time support workers on varying hours and one part-time co-ordinator employed in this Service. The **one-to-one support** to seven adults with learning disabilities living in the community is in the form of addressing issues such as healthy eating and lifestyles, managing a household, managing a budget, personal hygiene and self care while the drop-in Thursday lunchtime club gives adults with a learning disability somewhere warm and friendly to go.

The work we do in **Cregg House** is to provide community integration with residents involving bringing them into town to shop, attend hairdresser, have coffee etc.

The **Coffee Dock Café** based at Markievicz House, provided training opportunities in a social enterprise for up to 20 adults with a learning disability in 2017.

Attendance at the **Thursday Club** increased in 2017 with more people now coming each week.

Working with Cultural Minorities

Sligo FRC continues to be actively involved in working with minorities. This includes: Sligo FRC provided support to the **Sligo Intercultural Forum** board in order to run event to highlight the positives of integration. Again, this year we had the annual St Patricks Day



event in the Giloolley Hall and the International Concert in the Model for the second year in a row, up to 200 people attended each of these events.

Racist Indecent Reporting and Support Service: The steering group met four times in 2017 – they plan a workshop in 2018 as a follow up to the Symposium in November 2016. The Intercultural worker is available each Thursday morning for specific support for new communities. She has also run coffee mornings each month for new communities



In the Summer we collaborated with the Football Association of Ireland (FAI) **Integration through Football Project** supported under the Asylum Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) to support people with English language skills – this initiative was not successful and was deferred to 2018.

Globe House – we support the residents through the work in the library which is run by two volunteers from the Ursuline college and one of the Administrators. The volunteers played a big role in this year's Christmas Party in the Direct Provision Centre

Diversity Sligo we have been involved with Diversity Sligo since 2003. The Intercultural Worker represents Sligo FRC on this committee

Attended **Launch of the Asylum Migration and Integration Fund** in Dublin attended by the Junior Minister for Justice David Stanton, the Indian Event **India Fest 17** to launch Sligo Live and **Cultural Training** facilitated by Tusla.

Secured funding for a **Befriending Project** with the Syrian refugee families who started to arrive before Christmas. We interviewed 11 volunteers in December - this project will commence in 2018.

Working with Older People

In the summer of 2017, we received funding from the Community Foundation of Ireland support the formation of an **Older Peoples Forum** and to set up an **Older Peoples Council** in Co Sligo. In September, the Sligo FRC manager attended the Learning Network event in the Ashling Hotel on 6th September. Meetings were held with Active Aged groups and Sligo County Council personnel and the first event was held on 01 December in the Glass House. This will be complete by mid 2018.

Representation and Inter-Agency Initiatives

Sligo FRC is represented on a range of committees and boards in Sligo in order to represent the needs of the families and individuals and to bring about policy and practice changes which it is hoped will improve their lives. Here is a flavour of this work done in Sligo FRC

- Adoption (Information and Tracing) Bill 2016
- Caltragh Interagency Committee
- Child and Family Support Network areas 1 and 3
- Childcare managers network
- Connecting for Life implementation group – the Plan for Sligo Leitrim was launched by Minister of State at the Department of Health with special responsibility for Mental Health and Older People,
- CYPSC Board - The CYPSC Plan was launched in November 2017
- CYPSC Parenting subgroup
- CYPSC planning sub group

- National Childhood Network
- National Forum of FRC – the Sligo FRC manager became the NW Regional Representative in December
- North West Regional Forum of FRCs
- Ocean FM radio station
- PPN conference attended in the Clarion October 2017
- PPN Secretariat
- Sligo County Childcare board of directors
- Sligo Leitrim FRC managers meetings
- Sligo Newspapers
- Springboard Resource House Project board of directors
- website and Facebook pages
- Working Together towards Positive Parenting (2017) [Seminars or Conferences attended
- Women in Politics Symposium - Sligo IT – manager was asked to Chair a group
- Attended the opening and closing ceremonies of the European Volunteer Capital in January and November

Voluntary Board of Directors and Staff Team 2017

Sligo FRC is managed by a voluntary board of directors who oversee the work of the Centre and strategically guide the services. Twenty full and part-time staff are employed to manage and implement the work and ensure services are provided to the highest standard. Fifteen staff are employed through a CE training scheme.

Chairperson: Sonya Coffey
Treasurer: Nessa Cosgrove,
Secretary: Pauric Cuffee

Vice Chairperson: John Burrows
Directors: Nike Ogun, Sarah Wetheral, Michelle Lally, Ada Cunningham, Emir Cullen

The voluntary board of management comprised nine volunteers in 2017. The executive sub-group meets for employment/staff matters or specific issues. Sub-groups of 2-3 board members are established for specific, short term pieces of work in order to share the load and they've proved to be effective.

Staff Team

Elizabeth King	Manager (job sharing)
Caroline Bradshaw	Manager (job sharing)
Cathy McGowan	Administrator
Anne Rooney	Coordinator of Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities
Charlotte Bussmann	Family Support Childcare Co-coordinator
Cathy Kilcoyne	Family Support Service Coordinator and Intercultural Worker
Rose McCrann	Footprints Crèche Supervisor
Aishling Kelly	Family Support Worker
Nicola McCormac	Family Support Worker (left in Dec 2017)
Karen Casey	Coffee Dock supervisor and Family Support Worker
Lorraine Johnston	Family Support Worker
Charmaine Davidson	Family Support Worker
Emma O Connell	Disability Support Workers and Family Support Worker (maternity cover)
Ann Boyd	Disability Support worker and Social Club Leader
Maureen Scanlon	Disability Support worker (Retired September 2017)
Debbie Feeney	Disability Support Worker and Family Support Worker
Ann McPadden	Disability Support Worker

Lorna Tohey

Disability Support Worker and Social Club Leader

Kate Lambe

Disability Support Worker

Marion Roycroft

Coffee Dock supervisor

Students in 2017:

Nichola Fanin Sligo IT Social Studies

Noxola Manyka Ballinode College

FÁS Community Employment Scheme Participants (2017/2018), 19.5hrs/week

Administration and Reception

Rita Finan, Joanne Lang, Loiose MCElhatten and Philip Sheils, (Shauna Kelly and Karen McArt for Louise and Philip)

Childcare and Home Support Workers

Geraldine Ryan, Alveena Devaney

Jackie Dolphin, Shauna Foye

Caroline Cunningham, Julie Nichols

Disability Workers

Caretaker/Cleaner

Richard Deignan Tom Dillon

Volunteers

Jenny Jimoh – Intercultural Work 2 hours/week

Aisling O Reilly – Ursuline College Sligo – Globe House Library 1 hour/week

Sarah Kisby - Ursuline College Sligo– Globe House Library 1 hour/week

Robin Dailey – intercultural work – 2 hours/week

Team Building

This took place in Strandhill in 27 September 2017. All staff attended the walk around the loop followed by lunch in one of the local restaurants. It was an enjoyable event despite the rain.

Funding

Here is a breakdown of the funding received in 2017 (€500,143) and the sources of this funding.

