

# Sunflowers Chernobyl Appeal Children's Charity

A voluntary charity helping Chernobyl children



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## Sunflowers Chernobyl Appeal Annual Report 2015 -2016

### Directors Appointed AGM: 22/2/2017

Pat Dillon                      **Chairperson**

Aughrim  
Ballinasloe  
Co Galway

Ita Byrnes                      **Treasurer/Secretary**

Hazelwood  
Loughrea  
Co Galway

Brendan Fallon              **Child Protection Officer Governance**

Dear friends,

The Sunflowers Chernobyl Appeal and the many children and families that we support wish to extend a sincere '**Thank You**' to each and every one of you who make our projects possible from the donors to the volunteers who help fundraising, the people who travel to Belarus to help and last but not least, the host families and the various people who provide dental and medical services, arrange or book outings and parties for the visiting groups of children to Ireland.

We also wish to thank those who make beautiful items such as knitwear, supply clothing, footwear, medical aid or supply essentials such as groceries, food or transport for the visiting children. We also have to mention those who have provided accommodation and facilities for the children on many occasions.

Many acts of kindness and generously are greatly appreciated and words alone cannot express ours and the children's gratitude to all concerned.

As we plan to take children to Ireland this summer, we know that the same welcome will be there for the children. This year we continue on with our on-going projects in the orphanages, and out in the community. There have been many improvements in the orphanage and progress in the Day Car Centre due to the efforts of the charity and staff of these locations.

### **Humanitarian Trips & Projects:**

Volunteers travelled to Belarus to deliver humanitarian aid, sensory, therapy equipment, educational aids, medical aid and financial aid to orphanages, children and families in need of assistance.

We visited many sad cases of children in serious need of help and we hope to continue to help them as much as we are able to do so. Our work takes us from the orphanage in the north of Belarus near the Russian border all the way to the south of Belarus to a radiation contaminated area where we visited the Day Car Centre provided by the charity and now run by the local authorities. The Day Care Centre continues to provide services for young disabled and elderly people from the area. We were very happy to find that the staff has kept the centre in good condition and they continue to make improvements to the building and have extra equipment for activities. We will continue to help children through the centre and in the area as much as we can. We visit and deliver humanitarian aid and financial aid where necessary.

On our recent trip, we were able to meet and give assistance to a number of different children and families. We also visited children in foster homes that we will take to Ireland this year for rest and recuperation. We visited children at the orphanage where we also intend to take children to Ireland for rest and recuperation.

We continue to work at the orphanage and delivered humanitarian aid which included sensory therapy equipment, educational aids, craft materials, footwear, clothing and medical aid.

There is a marked amount of improvement carried out at the orphanage in relation to training for young special needs people who are more than capable of independent living if they get the opportunity. There is now a section in the orphanage with rooms that are fully fitted out to resemble an apartment and fitted kitchen, a bedroom and in the corridors there is a street scape with the shop, police station, post office etc. that can be used to explain what a typical village is like outside the walls of the orphanage.

There are now classes for cooking, housekeeping and training for social skills. There are also classrooms for the children and we hope that as many as possible will be able to use them. The most difficult problem is that there are so many children in the sprawling units who suffer from acute physical and mental disabilities kept in large groups who spend a lot of their time with very little stimulation as the staff are overwhelmed. We supply educational aids and toys for them and hope that they get to use them. The next group of children are the most vulnerable ones who spend their whole life cot or bed bound. We have already helped them in as many ways we are capable of. A second sensory therapy room has been supplied and we intend that when it is fitted that most of that time staff will take the cot bound children to the room for respite, in order to facilitate this we have ordered more custom made steel cots with wheels for the different sized children between age 4 to 25 years that will fit through the doorways allowing the staff to wheel them all the way to the therapy room or for other areas for treatment or respite in the day room or open air.

This will mean a huge positive change for the children as they have spent from birth up to 25 years of age in the same room, staring at nothing without stimulation. It was a great experience meeting the children who have benefited in the past on our recent trip. Many of them have made progress in life and some have not been so lucky.

In my case, we intend to continue to help the many vulnerable and sick children as we possibly can.

### **Children's Recuperation:**

We are planning to take a group of children to Ireland for rest and recuperation from the orphanage, foster homes and families. They will be accompanied by a doctor, translator and a nurse-carer from the orphanage. Again we wish to thank the Host families past and present who take the children into their homes. We also thank the different individuals, the various agencies, and communities, the medical, dental and the business community for their kind and generous support. It is only because of their generosity that we are able to give the children a chance to experience time away from their radiation contaminated homeland and to give them respite from their various different situations, in institutions, foster homes or in the wider community.

### **Future Plans:**

We plan to continue providing Humanitarian Aid, Education, Craft, Medical and Financial Aid to those who need it most. We continue to give assistance with maintenance of homes for Independent Living and will continue to bring children to Ireland for recuperation at this time.

We are also continuing to provide essential equipment and cots for children in the orphanage. We continue to be aware of the difficulties facing the charity in the present economic climate and are hoping that people will see fit to continue to give a little support in these times of austerity here at home.

### **Governance Code and Finances:**

We sincerely thank Ita Byrnes who prepared our accounts for our accountants. We have adopted and comply with the principles of Good Governance in accordance with the Governance Code and have completed the Governance Code Principles Statement which is displayed on our website and annual report.

We confirm that our organisation complies with the code for the community voluntary and charitable sector in Ireland.

Conclusion.

The charity cannot survive without the support of many people and in order to keep it alive to continue into the future we desperately need support to continue our voluntary work and to be able to continue to help children in need.

We wish to thank all our committee, volunteers, donors, fundraisers and those who provide services or hold events, for those who carry out random acts of kindness or for anything they may have done to the benefit of the children. We hope that you will see fit to help again sometime in the future. Thank you.