



# oasis NEWSLETTER

NOV-DEC 2022

ISSUE 2

Welcome to the second issue of Oasis Newsletter where we share quarterly updates on what's going on behind the scenes at Oasis! Get an insight into our current projects and events and read about what will be happening in the near future. Don't forget to follow us on our social media!



In November we visited Carrickfergus YMCA for our 3rd meet up. We discussed what Gets Active means to us and how the Gets Active key components work together to positively impact the participants from our clubs through holiday provision and weekly activities in clubs. We had an insight to the work which is going on around the UK to tackle food insecurity and how we can take learning from other organisations.



We went away with a fact finding task to see what our members from each club thought about the cost of living. At our December meeting, we stayed in Portadown where YAG participants came to Oasis/SSYCC/Uniting Communities Christmas trip to The Rink. Their action for this month was to encourage young people to fill in a questionnaire on their thoughts, opinions and experiences of food insecurity and the cost of living.

With help from staff, the young people excelled in approaching their peers, engaging with them in conversation and encouraging them to take part in our 'Guess The Sweets In The Jar' competition which was a huge hit as well as getting them to fill in the questionnaires. We are currently working on gathering the data and analysing the results!

We look forward to our visit to Dry Arch Group in January to continue building relationships and working towards change in our communities!

# AFTERSCHOOL CLUB



## Week 2

Everyone got the chance to learn some facts about ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphs, write their names and to decipher some pre – made sentences. A first for many this was enjoyed by all of the group with some doing some more when they got home. The group then got to take part in an energetic Zumba session, expertly led by Laura & Milena.

## Week 3

We all took part in traditional British playground games such as, Tag, Stuck In The Mud, British Bulldog and What Time Is It Mr Wolf? Many of these games from yesterday are not played in playgrounds anymore and was many young people's first time playing them. Everyone then got to enjoy some delicious Paddy Pizzas. Locally made soda bread was used along with a range of toppings such as ham, pepperoni and just cheese.



For this term we explored some of the many cultures of the participants who come to our afterschool club. Sessions were made up of art, sports, baking, quizzes and interactive activities.

## Week 1

We had fun testing their knowledge on phrases unique to Northern Ireland. This went down well and many young people had never heard of these phrases before, especially those from ethnic backgrounds. The group also had the opportunity to create and colour a traditional Chinese Dragon mask



## Week 4

For this session we got to learn about and create Indian henna designs. After drawing around their hand on a piece of paper, young people had fun using a range of styles and colours to make some stunning artwork. With Christmas just around the corner we then got to design a Christmas cookie which they then got to take home.

## Week 5

To finish of the term and prepare for the festive holidays, we all got to sit, relax and watch Elf and have some delicious treats





# JUNIOR ART CLUB

The young people decided after their cooking experiences to venture into the world of art and sewing! In the first week, they took part in some t-shirt painting, using a variety of stencils and fabric paints. Milena led us through the session, teaching us about fabric paint and the best way to keep our new t-shirts in the best condition.

The next few weeks saw many of us using sewing machines for the first time as we started a Christmas advent calendar project with Norah who supplied all the machines and materials and Sophie who joined Norah to help teach us some new skills. We first made lavender scented cushions to get used to the sewing machines and then moved on to stitching our advent calendars together! One week we stitched the layers together and the next we added a trim around the edges to finish it off. Then Laura bedazzled them using carefully placed jewel dots and they were finished, just in time to put some sweets in to start the countdown to Christmas! In our last week, we designed and made our own Christmas cards to give out to our loved ones.





# CHRISTMAS GETS ACTIVE: WINTER VILLAGE 2022

Our Christmas Gets Active event saw over 60 families visiting our winter village to take part in a variety of different activities! Preparations began at the start of November with a dedicated team of volunteers devoting their Monday and Wednesday afternoons to decoration prep and set up! We had nutcrackers being built from scratch, portraits of Rudolph through the years being designed, and signs hand-drawn and hand-painted for each of our stalls! Additionally, we had movie sets being recreated featuring some classic Christmas movies - they were a massive hit! It was a huge undertaking, one that couldn't have been completed so successfully without the help of our amazing volunteers!



**There was a wide range of activities for families to take part in including:**

- **Deer Deer Barn** - making reindeer food for Christmas Eve
- **Mrs Claus' Cafe** - Christmas treats (homemade shortbread, hot chocolate, non-alcoholic mulled wine) and a reindeer hot chocolate station
- **Santa's Post Office** - creating Christmas cards and writing letters to Santa
- Polar Express Photo Booth
- Elf Photo opportunity
- Home Alone Photo opportunity
- Winter Village Balloon Garland / Santa's Throne photo opportunity
- Face painting
- Visit to Santa's Grotto for photo and gift
- Christmas Chips or Goujons & Chips from Foodpath







***“Thanks so much for everything last night. It was our only Christmas get together all together and we really enjoyed the evening. We are very grateful for it all!”- parent's feedback***

Families could make their own way round each activity and spend as long as they wanted to at the different photo opportunities - the photos turned out amazing. The children excitedly queued to see Santa in his grotto - by far the most popular activity of the night. Every child left with a present (pyjamas/selection box) and enjoyed their chat with Santa Claus before he left to get back to work! We also had a special surprise from our Afterschool Club children who had been practising a song from the movie Nativity! that had been rewritten to describe the fun they have at Gets Active! Everyone sang really well and our parents and guardians were really impressed. As families made their way home, they each left with a box of fruit and vegetables, from Homegrown Farm Shop, for the Christmas period.

***“Thank you so much yesterday for the food & gifts, I appreciate the help that you guys are giving me this year. Thank you ” - parent's feedback***







# ASPIRE CHRISTMAS PGA ART PREP

In the 4 weeks leading up to our Christmas Gets Active event, some of our amazing volunteers dedicated their free time on Monday and Wednesday afternoons to come into our centre and we began preparations for the event. From our nutcrackers and movie sets, to the fireplace in Santa's Grotto, almost everything was handmade by our staff team and incredible volunteers! Even the Polar Express Train was made from boxes, black paper and a LOT of paint!



"I've started to open up more when talking to others and feel much more confident from coming to the art sessions. I think that the Christmas event went really well and the kids were having fun. Seeing all of my hard work come to life was an amazing feeling. It was my first time taking care of a stall and I feel as though it went really well!" - Matylda

"The Christmas event was amazing. Everyone had an amazing time and I got to see everyone doing their fair share of hard work, and I have to say - we did an amazing job! I got to take pictures of the parents and the kids in the throne and it was amazing to see the kids having fun. When they walked in, just seeing their faces light up with excitement was amazing." - Diogo



# COMING UP...

Youth Advisory - Midterm madness

New Term of After-School Club

Easter Gets Active Preparation

Easter Gets Active - On the farm

Thank you to Our partners and funders for their generosity and continuous support!

