

# LIGHT FOR CHILDREN

## AGM REPORT

28<sup>th</sup> January 2020

Thank you all for attending this evening's meeting. I hope that you will enjoy listening to a review of all that has been happening in Dorohoi over the last twelve months.

### Medical support

Throughout the year, we have continued to fund **optician** appointments and new **glasses**, as required, for the 140 children currently living in the state run apartments in Dorohoi. We have maintained our agreement with a local **dentist**, who treats the children for a small monthly charge and we have continued to fund **medication** and **medical tests** for acute illnesses, as well as a **speech therapist**, who works individually with several of the younger children.

We are very thankful that the **two girls** who in recent years have battled with acute lymphoblastic leukaemia, are both doing well. We continue to help the seven year old, who lives in care, enabling her to have bottled drinking water and more nutritious food, when required. Both girls continue to attend check-ups at the hospital in Iasi but these appointments are gradually becoming less frequent. The seven year old is currently a high flyer in Year 1 and the fifteen year old is enjoying her first year in the sixth form.

### Education

We have continued to fund **extra afternoon schooling** for a number of primary aged children and have again provided all of the **text books** required by the children living in state care in Dorohoi, for the current academic year.

It is our privilege to support an 18 year old young man, who lives with a foster family near to Dorohoi, but attends a bilingual Christian sixth form in Targu Mures, some 300km away. There, he has a fantastic opportunity to develop a range of skills and abilities alongside his academic work. We continue to donate £50 a month towards the cost of his accommodation.

When I met with this young man last summer, I asked him how he manages for pocket money when he's at school and he explained that he takes in ironing from his friends and colleagues, contra cost! When he came home for Christmas, I asked him how his little business was going and was amazed to hear that he now oversees a small group of ironers, as demand for his services is so high! He is doing very well! We first met him when he joined our orchestra as a young teenager and are delighted that he still plays the violin with us during school holidays.

During the summer, we were delighted to contribute towards the travel expenses for **Octavian** to attend a summer school in Canada. Octavian is from Dorohoi and is currently excelling in his studies at university in Bucharest. He contacted me at the beginning of the summer to explain that he had won a place at a summer school in Canada but that he needed to fund his own flight. His parents were able to contribute but couldn't pay the total price of the ticket. I contacted several local charities on Octavian's behalf and together, we were able to raise the money needed. He was overwhelmed with excitement and gratitude!

We are in awe of both of these young men's achievements and confident that they will continue to inspire and enhance the communities in which they live and study.

### **Extra curriculum activities**

Wherever possible, we have endeavoured to either organise or support the organisation of extra curriculum activities, believing that **sport, music and art** are extremely important for children and young people's development.

Over the last twelve months, such events have included football competitions and prize givings, Easter craft sessions, two separate trips to watch Botosani Philharmonic Orchestra in concert and a competition to design a Christmas card. We also contributed towards the transport costs for a group of the apartment children to attend a camp in the mountains, in July.

## Church music

**The church orchestra** continues to rehearse regularly. Recent additions to our repertoire include “There is a Redeemer”, “Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord” and “The First Noel”! Despite two of our older members moving away to university in the autumn of 2019, we are delighted that a number of the younger children, who started to learn to play the recorder just twelve months ago, are now very capable members of the main orchestra.

Over the last twelve months, we have played regularly in our local church and have also been invited to play in a number of village churches and at a local restaurant.

As well as encouraging the children and young people to rehearse, we also encourage them to read, recommending **books** that I found to be inspiring as a teenager. The Romanian translation of “The Hiding Place” has proved to be very popular this year!

## Fire engine

In August, Carl Hunt, a retired firefighter from Grimsby, drove out from the UK to Dorohoi, in a **fire engine** full of equipment, which he donated to the local village of Cristesti. It was a privilege to be able to help Carl make some of the necessary arrangements for his trip. We were also very grateful to him for bringing a lot of **school stationary** and the funds required to purchase **new glasses** for three teenagers living in the state care system in Dorohoi.

## Educational toys

At the end of the summer, we were delighted to receive ten boxes of new **educational toys** from Bob and Jan Baxter of Alba Aid, Scotland. Over recent months, we have used the toys as birthday and Christmas gifts, as well as prizes for the competition to design a Christmas card. One of the toys in particular, “Adventure Passport” has proved to be a very valuable resource for English lessons. As well as giving them to individual children and families, I made a point of giving the toys to three local English teachers to use in their lessons.

## Christmas

For Christmas 2019, we were very grateful to receive a donation of £300 from Reigate Baptist Church, which amongst other treats, enabled us to take a group of 50 of the apartment children out to a local restaurant for a special meal. All of the apartment children received shoebox gifts this year from other organisations. We were fortunate enough to be able to help with the distribution of these boxes and to witness the joy that they brought. As previously mentioned, we also used some of the educational toys that we received from Scotland as Christmas gifts.

## The original “Dersca” children

The **original group of children from the orphanage in Dersca**, are now aged between 28 and 33 years old and will always hold a very special place in our hearts. We manage to keep in touch with most of these young adults and are privileged to be able to take part in many of the important events in their lives. Over the years, we have been invited to their school concerts, art exhibitions, graduation services, weddings, baptisms and sadly, several of their funerals.

Last summer, we were delighted to be invited to attend the wedding of one of these young ladies in a village just outside Dorohoi. We couldn't be more proud of the way that **she** has overcome a very difficult start in life and has matured into a hardworking, kind and loving, married lady! She now lives with her husband in Luton, where they both work at a hotel!

As usual, I would like to take this opportunity to **thank you** all for your continued interest in the work of Light for Children. We are humbled by the ongoing support that we have and are very aware that we couldn't do what we do without your help.

### **Our special thanks to:**

\* the LFC committee for all their hard work, time and commitment, not to mention their love and friendship;

\*Mary Aplin and Karen Proctor for all that they do to keep the LFC accounts in order;

\*St John's Community Church, for their ongoing support;

\*individuals and local churches in Staffordshire and beyond, who support us practically, prayerfully and/or financially.

**Helen and Costel Cosman.**