

# **European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education**

## **- Project Visit to St. Michael's House 15<sup>th</sup> November 2011 –**

### **St. Michael's House**

St. Michael's House was established in 1955, by a group of parents of children with intellectual disabilities looking for appropriate day services and education for their children. Over the past 56 years, St. Michael's House has been a leader in the development and provision of community-based services for people with intellectual disabilities in Ireland.

The Organisation is a voluntary body and registered charity, governed by a board of directors, many of whom are parents of service users. Funding for the organisation and its services is achieved through substantial direct funding from the Health Service Executive (the Irish statutory health service), combined with Department of Education & Skills (Ireland) and fundraising. We currently provide a range of services to 1,602 children and adults with an intellectual disability in over 170 centres throughout the Greater Dublin Area. Services include: clinical, early services, special national schools, supports to children in mainstream schools, vocational training, adult day services, employment support, residential, independent living, respite, social, recreational and specialised Alzheimer services.

Working in partnership with service users and their families, we are leaders in developing services which are guided by best international practice and the belief that people with an intellectual disability are full and equal members of society.

### **St. Michael's House Short-Term Training Centre (Visit Location)**

#### ***The Service***

The Short-Term Trainig Centre (STTC) offers a full-time Monday-Friday 3-year transition programme focussed on preparing school leavers with intellectual disabilities from special national schools and mainstream secondary schools for life, further education and the world of work. Our catachment area spans the entire greater Dublin area.

#### ***Service Locations***

The STTC service is provided over 2 locations: Adare Green, Coolock & our new centre at Mask Rd., Artane (opened Oct 2011). 23 service users attend our Coolock centre and 16 attend our Mask Rd. centre full-time.

#### ***The Programme***

The programme offers service users a combination of centre-based training opportunities and supports to access community-based leisure and further education opportunities. Centre-based training includes a range of modules, such as:

- Independent living skills
- Personal development
- Community skills
- Leisure activities
- Computers
- Work experience

### ***Staffing***

The STTC team consists of the following staff members:

- Centre Manager
- Coordinator
- 4 Tutors
- 3 Social Care Workers
- 3 Care Assistants
- Inputs from a range of clinical disciplines as required (i.e. Psychology, Social Work, Psychiatry, Medicine, Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Therapy, Physiotherapy and Dietitian)

### ***Funding***

The STTC programme is funded in part by the Health Service Executive (HSE) and in part by the Department of Education & Skills (DOE). The DOE contributes the pay for the 4 tutor posts and the remaining staffing and capital costs are covered by HSE funding.

### ***New Developments***

The STTC programme is currently going through a period of rapid change and expansion, involving a number of key changes, including:

- The opening of Mask Rd. centre in October 2011 to enable expansion of the service to meet the needs of an increased number of service users
- A broader profile of needs among service users (i.e. a greater number of young adults with physical disabilities or autism in addition to their intellectual disability are now requiring the service)
- From 2012, St. Michael's House is to offer further education leading to the FETAC Major Award in General Learning Level II (modules currently in development)
- The St. Michael's House EVOLVE project is underway and has as its main aims:
  - o a move away from fixed centred-based full-time day and training programmes that offer specialised service provision.
  - o to offering flexible, individualised packages of supports to individuals and their families that enable them, wherever possible and appropriate, to access mainstream leisure, further education and work opportunities in the community.

### **St. Michael's House Personnel who will Meet the Project Team 15<sup>th</sup> November 2011**

We greatly look forward to meeting with you when you visit the 2 STTC service locations on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2011 2.30-4pm. On your visit you will meet:

- Eilín de Paor, Chair of the STTC Development Group (a group charged with the design of a new model for the STTC in line with the St. Michael's House EVOLVE project)
- Julie Dempsey, STTC Centre Manager
- Elaine McCloskey, Coordinator
- Teresa Gadd, St. Michael's House FETAC Coordinator
- Members of the STTC staff team: Tutors, Social Care Workers and Care Assistants
- Students attending the STTC at our Coolock and Artane locations