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Rainbow Club Cork Centre for Autism

Strategic Plan 2020 - 2023



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Rainbow Club Cork Centre for Autism

Strategic Plan 2020-2023



VISION

Our vision is for every child and young person with autism to thrive in a society where Autism is embraced and understood.

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Rainbow Club Cork Centre for Autism, the Club opened its doors in June 2015 with an aim to help and support families living with autism

The club was founded by Karen and Jon O' Mahony, whose sons Sean and Stephen have autism.

Karen and Jon, along with many families in Cork, suffered from the lack of resources in Ireland for children with autism, particularly early intervention, and felt the need to take matters into their own hands.

Our impact to date

When they started in June 2015, 26 children attended the Rainbow Club on a weekly basis. By January 2016, 125 children were attending every week. By January 2017 the Rainbow Club had 237 children on a weekly basis and are now running at full capacity with over 430 children using our services.

To facilitate the 300 families on the Clubs waiting list, the Rainbow Club requires much larger premises to meet the demand for its services and allow it to grow along with the children and provide services for them through to adulthood.

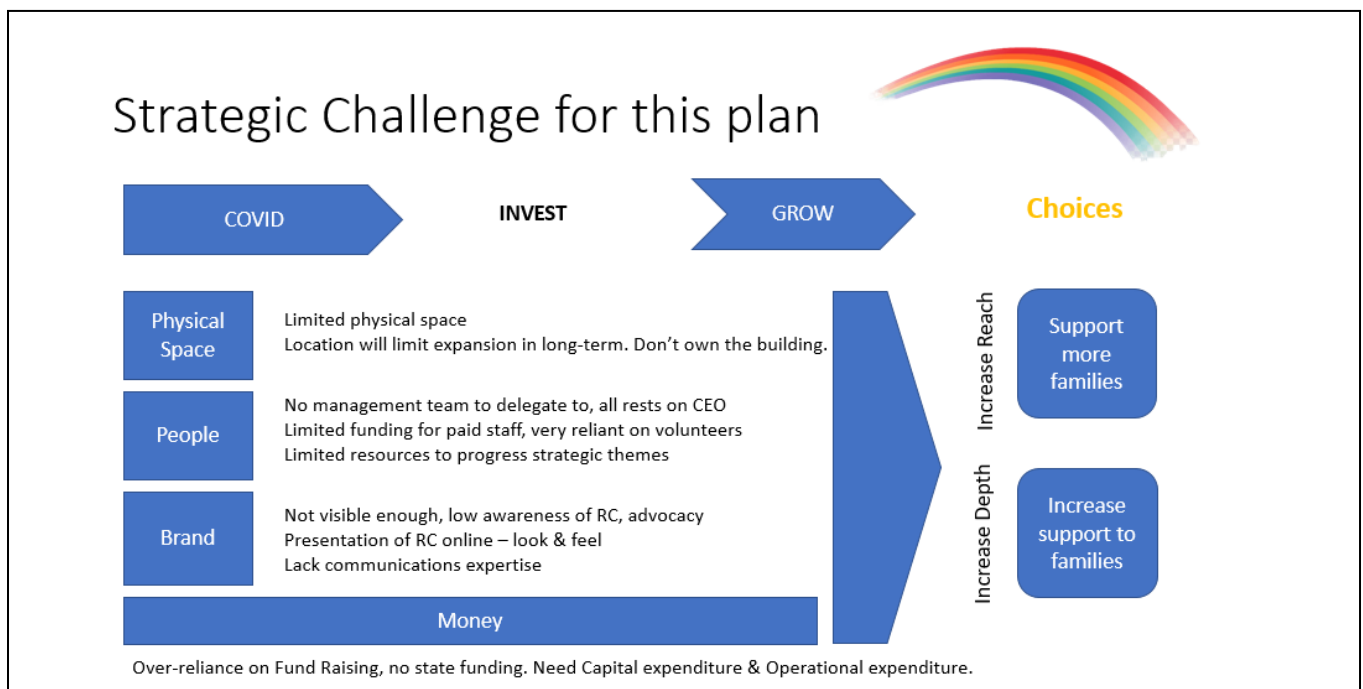
We are supported by a team of 60 trained volunteers

Recipients of the following awards, Winner of Social Inclusion Fund Ireland Award 2019, LIBA Awards 2019, Charity Impact Awards 2018, 2016 - Lord Mayor's Community & Voluntary Awards, 2017 – Runner's up to the CARA Sports Inclusion Award, 2016 - Hidden Hero Award.

Our challenge is we have a huge demand on our services, heavy reliance on CEO, staff and 60 volunteers.

Our ambition is to offer more social hours and support more families and children.

We have planned for Covid 19 impact and have identified opportunities for the Rainbow Club.



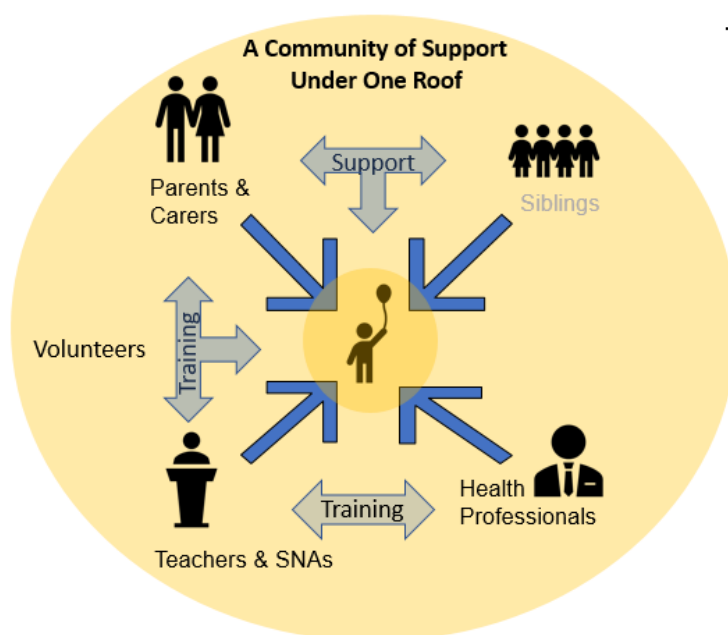
The Problem

- There are approximately 1,570 children in Cork waiting for an Assessment of Need (AON) for 18-30 months.
- Children with ASD are not getting the therapies and social skills development needed in a timely manner, thus limiting their life potential.
- Health services are in professional silos, no communication.
- Transitions unplanned; State support ends at aged 18 making the transition to adulthood extremely stressful.
- Lack of ASD specific competence and ASD awareness amongst some professionals, particularly some of those working in Primary Care services.
- Inappropriate referrals.
- Families have no roadmap to ASD services.
- Need for parent training and support around ASD.

The Report of the Review of the Irish Health Services for Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders highlights the following

1. 1 in 68 people are diagnosed with autism.
2. A waiting list of over 300 families.
3. There are approximately 1,570 people in Cork/Kerry area waiting for an Assessment of Need (AON) for 18-30 months. Our proposal **should** give the child access to Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Therapy, Physio and Psychologist services.
4. However, we see long waiting lists, a lack of cohesion between the HSE, Dept. of Education & Skills (DES) and National Council for Special Education (NCSE) regarding a model of how to clearly identify and meet the health and educational needs of individuals with ASD.

Our Solution



The Rainbow Club Model

- An innovative child-centered community-based model
 - Providing an holistic service aged 2 to 25.
 - Providing ASD specific competence training to parents and the professionals that surround the child.
 - Providing support, counselling and mentoring to parents (and in future siblings).
-
- A direct response to the gap in provision.
 - In-line with best practice inter-disciplinary approach
 - Supported by Gov & HSE policy recommendations*.
 - Reducing HSE waiting lists
 - Unique in combining therapies with social skills

Our Mission

Our mission is to ensure that children with autism experience the joy of childhood and reach their full potential in life. We do this by providing an holistic community of support for children and young people. We bring services and social groups under one roof and embrace the whole support system for the child, providing training and advice for families, teachers and the wider community.

Our Offering

For Children & Young People with Autism

- Social skills groups for all ages
- Sports, Music and Drama Activities
- OT, SLT, Play and Art Therapies
- Café training, employment and food service (older young people)
- Early intervention for pre-schoolers

For Parents, Carers and family

- Information & Advocacy
- Peer support, Buddy system
- Mentorship
- Training for Parents
- Parental well-being supports

For Professionals

- Online training courses for Teachers, SNA's & Parents
- Certified Training for volunteers & Staff
- Certified Training for Healthcare Workers

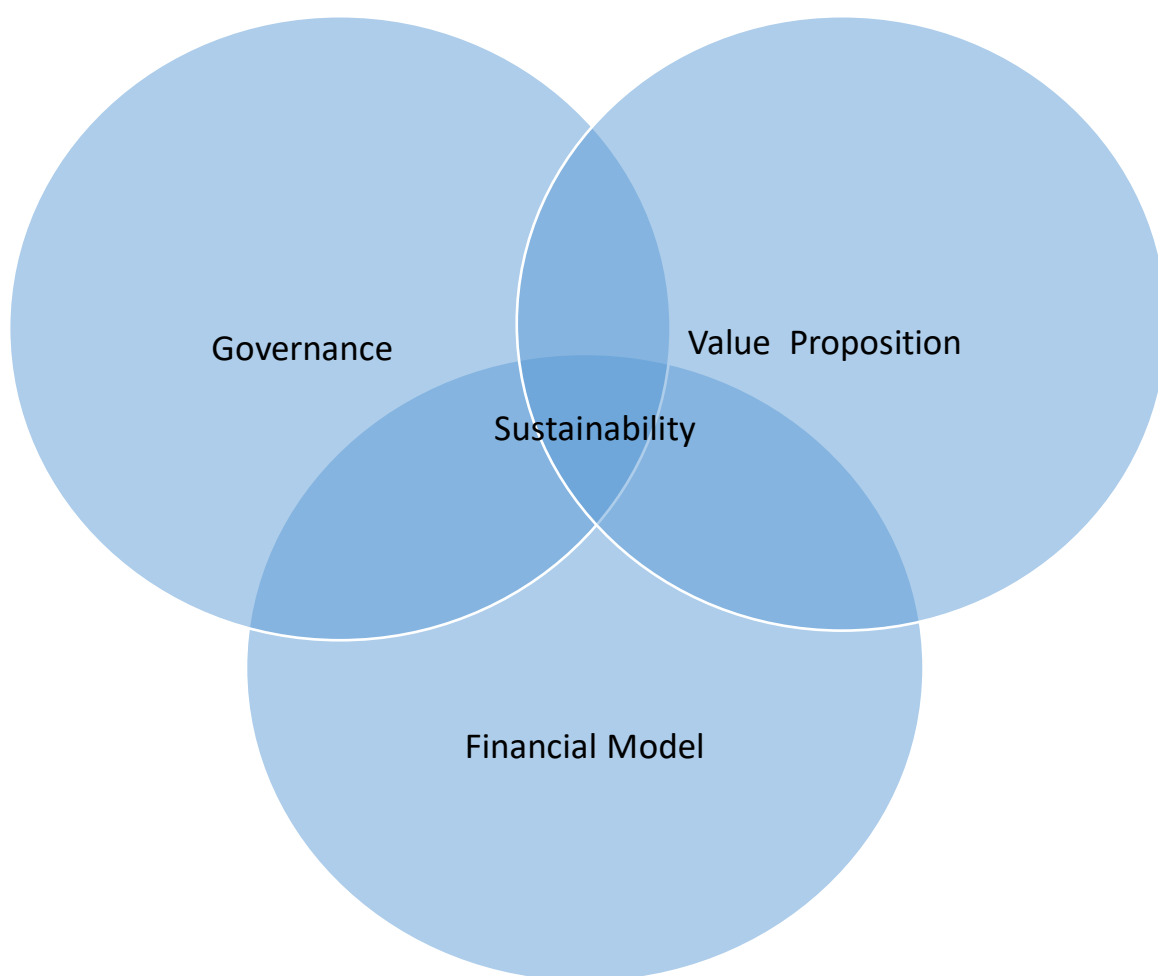
Rainbow Club Strategic Goals 2020 – 2023

The overarching goal for the next three years is to establish strong foundations for the sustainable growth of the Rainbow Club.

Goal 1: Establish the RC as a flagship initiative for autism supports for children.

Goal 2: Ensure a sustainably resourced centre, with the capacity to grow to meet the needs of families in county Cork.

Goal 3: Increase our offering, seek to support more families and professionals.



A large orange circle is positioned in the upper left quadrant of the page. Inside the circle, the text 'Establish the Rainbow Club as a flagship initiative for Autism supports for children.' is written in white, sans-serif font, centered within the circle.


Establish the Rainbow Club
as a flagship initiative for
Autism supports for children.

Objectives

1. Increase the visibility of the Rainbow Club.
2. Develop internal champions within HSE & Túsla Cork at a senior level.
3. Demonstrate the Impact of Rainbow Club and build the case for support. Build a vocal constituency of support.

Impact by 2023

- Relationship established between HSE/Cope Foundation and Brothers of Charity.
- Evaluation demonstrates impact.
- At least one new area looking at replicating Rainbow Club.



Ensure a sustainably resourced centre, with the capacity to grow to meet the needs of families in Cork.

Objectives

4. Grow income streams
5. Secure capital funding of €1.2m to enable building expansion
6. Invest in people, systems and procedures

Impact by 2023

- Earned income covers 100% of operating costs by 2023
- Evaluation demonstrates impact.
- At least one new area looking at replicating RC.
- Day to day operations of the centre no longer dependent on one person Founder-CEO.



Increase our offering, seek to support more families and professionals

Objectives

7. Provide additional hours and weekend opportunities in OT, SLT, Play and Art therapies, Social Groups, Sports, Music and Drama. Café training for pre-employment experience.
8. Early intervention for preschoolers.
9. Supports for Parents, carer's and families (Information & Advocacy, mentorship and wellbeing supports)
10. Provide a suite of training and certified courses for professionals (Teachers, SNA's, Healthcare workers, Volunteers and Staff.)

Impact by 2023

Increased reach of services and supports for families, reduces waiting lists.

Increased contact time with families.

Improved awareness of ASD among professionals.

Ultimately strategy must translate into action in order to be effective.

Game Changers

Revenue streams

- Membership fees paid by Standing Order at €42/month
- Full complement of therapies provided, cost recovery basis
- Certificate Training income

Centre Capacity

- Procurement of three portacabins creates space to expand therapy hours
- Appointment of staff enables use of centre in the morning, late evening and full day Sat (possibly Sun)
- Evaluation
- Simple measurement tool to build evidence base
- Longitudinal study to measure quality of life impact

Impact

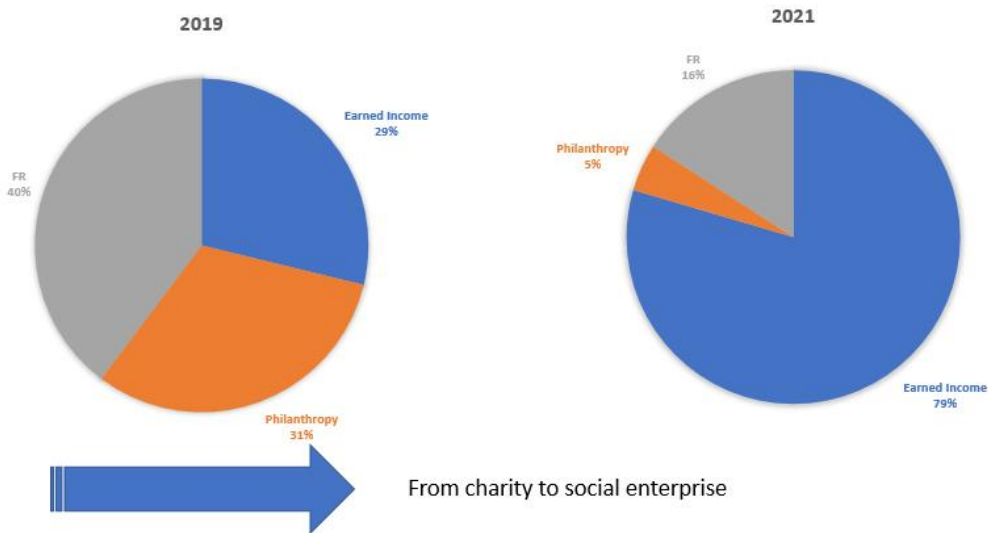
- Move from 100% Voluntary to 80% Voluntary
- Meets 98% of operating costs by 2023. Sustainability NOT dependent on State funding.
- Surplus income – permanent build and/or seed fund establishment of new centres
- Significant potential to increase numbers served. Not included in financials.
- Day to day operations of the centre no longer dependent on one person of Founder-CEO
- Model recognized and supported by the State to expand.

Implications

- Membership numbers will return to pre-covid levels in 2021
- Growth in new members held back, as we offer more hours to current members
- Full suite of therapies from 2021 – OT & SLT on staff, Play, Art, Music & Sport. Cost recovery/contribution basis.
- Training courses especially certificate course with Cork ETB will generate good income
- Income from membership fees enables hiring of room assistants & centre manager. This enables longer opening hours.
- Fundraising focused on new projects and capital development.
- Capacity reached by end 2022

Financials

Total Income

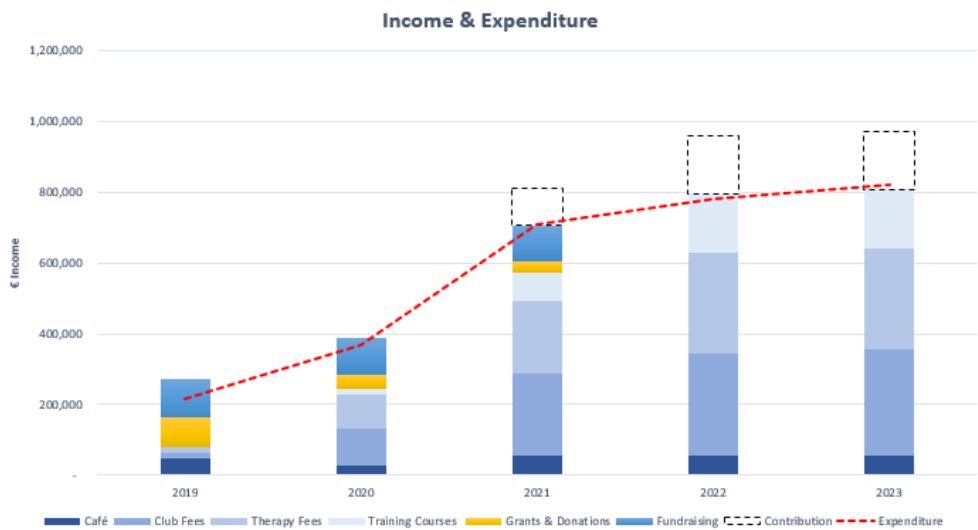


The move from charity to social enterprise will provide a sustainable income to secure the future of the Rainbow Club.

Growth – Op Income & Expenditure



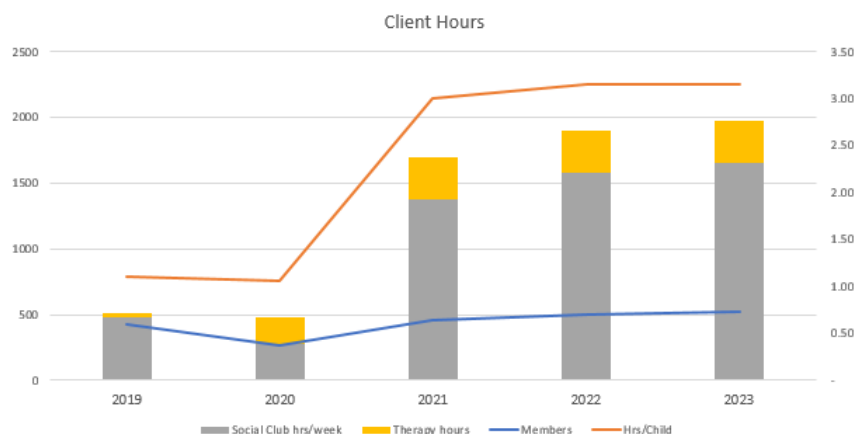
Earned Income grows to cover operating costs. Fundraising & Grants are for new projects and capital.



Growth - Numbers

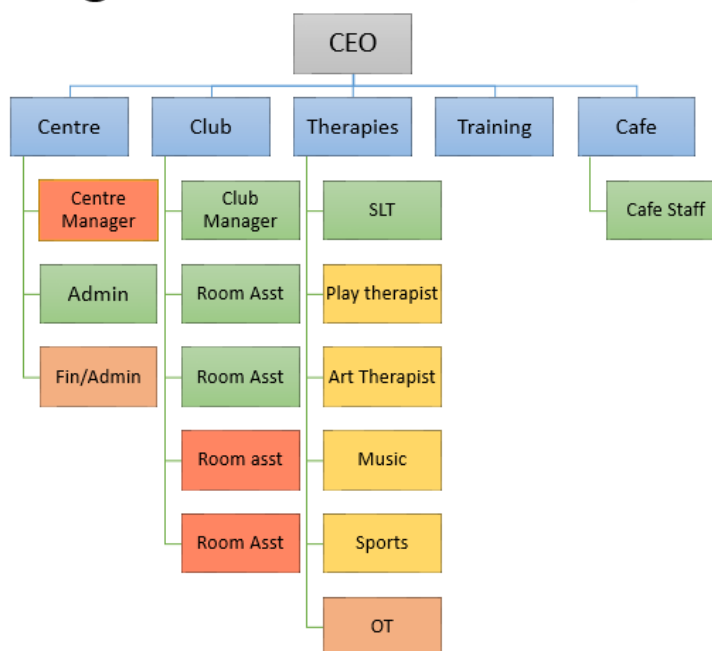


Return to 2019 levels (430 member) by 2021 with 460 members
 Focus increasing hours for members – aim 3 hrs/child (up from 1hr)
 Social hours grown through greater use of hours in the day, enabled by increase in staff
 Therapy hours max capacity due to limited space in 2021.



Capacity reached by 2022/23

Organisation growth



- Business Units
- Staff 2019
- Staff 2020
- Staff 2021
- Contract staff

Key Milestones



Goals	2020	2021	2022-2023
Ensure a sustainably resourced centre, with the capacity to grow to meet the needs of families in Cork City & Co.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SO/DD set up by 90% of parents by end July, 100% end Aug (235) • Recruitment of staff & Vol • CRM system in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • financial expertise in-house for management of centre finances • CEO goes on holiday while centre is open. • Bursaries in-place to provide enhanced subsidy for low income families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operating expenditure covered by earned income. • Extension built
Increase our offering & seek to support more families & professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full programme of Art, play and music therapy. • Online training courses for teachers, SNA's & parents • Parental well-being (am) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Back at full capacity • OT FT on staff • Increased social hours/child • Certificate training course 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-School social club/early intervention established
Establish the RC as a flagship initiative for autism supports for children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rebrand/Website • Impact measurement system designed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UCC longitudinal study • Relationship with HSE/Cope/BOC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replication options developed



PRINCIPLES

The following principles are the foundation for the Rainbow Club for Children with Autism and a guide to the execution of the Rainbow Club's Strategic Plan.

- The Rainbow Club (RC) strategic plans directives and resources will support the (RC) mission and vision.
- Accidents, occupational injuries and illnesses are unacceptable impediments to the Rainbow Club missions, well-being and morale.
- Under the Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 and the Safety Health and Welfare at Work (General Application Regulations) 2007, employers, employees and contractors are responsible and accountable for taking necessary actions to provide safe and healthful operations, equipment and workplaces.
- The safety and welfare of children and vulnerable adults shall remain high on the (TRC's) agenda throughout the delivery of this strategy. The safeguarding of children is of paramount importance to the Rainbow Club. We ensure all TC staff and volunteers working with children or vulnerable adults receive appropriate training in child safeguarding. We shall ensure that training and resources are made available to those in the Rainbow Club with responsibility for children.
- The (RC) shall provide Garda vetting, ensuring Children First, through the e-vetting system for staff and volunteers who may be required to work with children or vulnerable adults.
- Decision makers at every level will employ the Rainbow Club's composite risk management process to avoid unacceptable residual risks to children, staff, members, equipment and the environment.
- The guiding philosophy of the Rainbow Club is to provide support, engagement, training and enabling competencies for children and families living with autism spectrum disorder and do so in a manner which takes into account the particulars of their situation.
- The Rainbow Club Strategic Plan and associated action plans and metrics will be used to determine resource requirements for the provision of the Rainbow Club programmes.
- The Rainbow Club strategy plan initiatives will be developed and co-ordinated to create a synergistic effort with other like-minded organisations and state agencies.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Responsibilities for execution of the Rainbow Club Strategic Plan are with;
- Chairperson of the Rainbow Club Board.
- Supported by the Rainbow Club Board members.
- The Rainbow Club Chairperson and Board Members, provides overall policy decision, direction and oversight, to ensure the objectives of the Rainbow Club are implemented to optimise participation in the Rainbow Club programmes and events.
- The Rainbow Club Board members provide policy direction and oversight in areas relating to autism education in the community.
- The Rainbow Club Board members provide policy direction and oversight in areas relating to developing training and development programmes to meet the needs of the Autism community while focusing combatting disadvantage and promoting social inclusion.
- The Rainbow Club Board members provide policy direction and oversight in areas relating to training people with autism to a level so as to enable them to access employment opportunities in industry.
- The Rainbow Club Board members provide policy direction and oversight in areas relating to creating progression pathways for people with autism to both work and further education.
- The Rainbow Club advises supports and oversees execution of the Rainbow Club programmes. Synchronizes services and courses, along with part-time and evening courses and other organised events for families, volunteers and supporters. It will ensure management integration efforts across the Rainbow Club range of training initiatives to ensure it meets the external support organisations requirements and serves as the management advocate for all.
- The Rainbow Club Supervisors and Tutors provide advice, supports, oversees and provides training management integration efforts across all training scheme elements through the provision of autism training programmes. In addition, manages allocated funding provided for approved integrated autism scheme activities. Supervisors are assisted by management and administrative Staff who manages allocated funding provided for approved integrated scheme activities.
- The Rainbow Club Manager, scheme trainers and therapists plan, provide advice, supports and oversees training management integration efforts across all schemes through the provision of autism training programmes. In addition, manages allocated hours provided for approved integrated autism scheme activities.

- The Rainbow Club Course Coordinator and Assistant Coordinator, provides advice, supports, oversees and provides training management integration efforts across all courses or schemes through the provision of Autism related training programs. Coordinators are assisted by management and administrative Staff who manages allocated funding provided for approved integrated specific courses or scheme activities.
- All supervisors and coordinators and tutors manage and implement comprehensive autism and personal development training programmes that ensure child safety and health & safety. All course leaders shall provide opportunities for participation by all in (autism related) education, concepts and strategic autism development plans into their functional areas.
- The Secretary/Administration Officer of the Rainbow Club shall provide administrative support for meetings, and for dissemination of information and publications. In addition shall manage and administer the Rainbow Club in a professional and efficient way so as to achieve its mission, goals and objectives.
- Financial Management: The Rainbow Club Treasurer / accountant shall develop a solid financial base which enables the Rainbow Club to manage, fund and resource the proposed development project and all of its key areas within a framework of 2 years.
- Youth Policy: The Rainbow Club Designated Liaison Person shall provide policy direction and programmes that provide opportunity for youth participation (male and female) in autism programmes. The Rainbow Club staff and volunteers working with children or vulnerable adults must complete Child Protection Training (Túsla—Children First) and Designated Liaison Person must complete the Túsla training. The Rainbow Club Safeguarding policy and procedures document outlines what is required for members working with children and vulnerable adults, it includes training requirements and frequency of retraining re-vetting periods.
- Physically Challenged people with Autism: The Rainbow Club shall provide guidance and assistance to participants to help improve facilities for those who find themselves physically or mentally challenged.



PURPOSE

The purpose of the Rainbow Club Strategic Plan is to:

1. Communicate the Rainbow Club leadership's commitment to Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) services development for the community.
2. Provide a single, integrated framework for the Rainbow Club mission, vision, goals and objectives.
3. Emphasise the Autism Spectrum Disorder and integration of the Rainbow Club's ASD programme developments into the community in support of our vision, mission and senior leadership goals.

The Rainbow Club Image

The Rainbow Club will be seen and acknowledged nationally and internationally as a state recognised autism resource centre and as being,

- flexible and impartial
- inclusive of all people with autism and their families
- experienced autism service providers and advisors
- highly motivated
- A professional autism service provider that is responsive to:
 - community needs,
 - its moral and legal obligations
 - the requirements of all its customers.



Overview of goals, objectives and Action Plans *Chapter 6*

Achievement of the Rainbow Club strategic plan goals and objectives will provide a sustainable culture where the Rainbow Club enables the support, training, education of people with ASD to promote inclusivity and career opportunities leading to a fulfilled lifestyle and participation in all aspects of society. These institutional goals are designed to promote ASD services within the Rainbow Club programme success, support transformation, improve quality and effective ASD therapy, improve opportunities for participation in education and to enable the Rainbow Club achieve increased participation goals.

Each objective has a lead and support proponents. Proponents are responsible for developing and managing execution of action plans. Action plans must be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timed. The development of action plans will be facilitated by liaising with external organisations, State agencies, forums and

Safety Advisor. The Rainbow Club chairperson will approve and periodically review execution of action plans as required and provide feedback to the lead proponent.

The Rainbow Club has long recognised that our mission is accomplished only because Cork entrusts us with its most precious resources, people and the skills of our therapists, tutors, instructors and volunteers. Although participating in any aspect of the ASD services brings with it many rewards there are some inherent risks. Harm to children or vulnerable adults, injuries resulting from activities related accidents are not acceptable. It is our obligation to ensure that our programmes, staff and volunteers participate safely within The Rainbow Club by providing a welcoming, safe, healthy ASD friendly environment and the promotion of child safeguarding at all times.

The Rainbow Club is concerned about the low level of ASD services provided by state agencies and will do all in its power to assist all those affected by ASD. The Rainbow Club chairperson and board members along with the staff set goals to reduce the circumstances which influence the decline in ASD services for families in the Cork region by the end of fiscal year 2023 (using fiscal year 2020 as the baseline). Sharing our concerns, we have published the Rainbow Club Strategic Plan, to communicate the Rainbow Club's vision and strategic plan goals for ASD in Cork.

This plan outlines the Rainbow Club's vision, goals, and objectives for improving the ASD services in Cork and reducing those circumstances that negatively impact on it. It also offers a basis for action planning to provide clear guidelines for organisations to deal with matters directly or indirectly impacting on ASD.

We expect board members, staff, tutors to lead in these efforts, to integrate our policies and procedures for the management of ASD into every ASD event they plan and, participate in.

Progress towards achieving the goals and objectives of the Rainbow Club Strategic Plan will be tracked and reported to the Rainbow Club chairperson on a periodic basis. We are committed to the promotion of inclusive ASD opportunities in Cork, and are confident that the actions outlined in this plan will improve participation in ASD services and enhance the skills of those affected by ASD who join with us working to the highest international standards.

The Rainbow Club has adopted the Code of Good Governance and has completed the journey to full compliance. We have also completed the journey for the Code for Fundraising for Voluntary Organisations and are currently migrating towards the Charities Governance Code as set out by the Charities Regulator in 2018. We are awaiting the Triple Lock Standard accreditation.

We expect full cooperation and compliance from our Management and Staff, Supervisors, Assistant Coordinators and Administrative Staff and volunteers to ensure we achieve our goals in this regard.



Chairperson of the Board

The Rainbow Club

