



Message from the CDNM

Welcome to CDNT 3 – St Columba's first newsletter.

This spring, our cherry blossom tree has been in full bloom. Many families and staff have enjoyed stopping to admire it during visits, a small but welcome reminder of growth, change and calmer moments in busy days.


Thank you to all families for your patience, feedback, and ongoing partnership with CDNT 3.


We look forward to using our newsletter as another way to stay in touch with you all and update you on our work.

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Staffing

We are currently staffed at just over 50% of the team needed.

The team has been growing steadily over the past 3 years. We have Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy and Psychology represented on the team.

Regrettably we don't have a social worker on our team, but we are hopeful that this role will be filled within the next few months, as well as looking to build out our numbers for all our disciplines.

Caseload

Open and waitlist numbers

- **Open referrals: 265**
- **Children on waiting list: 110**
- **Opening referrals from: 2021**

Despite staffing challenges, the team continues to prioritise safety, quality, and meaningful supports for children and families.

Our last forum

The Family Forum was a positive and welcoming event. Parents found it helpful to hear from others who are facing similar challenges.

The guest speaker, Adam Harris from AsIAM (www.asiam.ie), shared very useful information about supports they offer families. The forum also included a short update on current staffing and how it affects services.

We have two family representatives, Dee and Margaret. My thanks to them both for volunteering their time for these roles. Their contributions are very much appreciated as part of the development and running of our family forums.



Our next forum

We will have our next forum on **11 June 2026, morning time, (10am-12pm)**.

You will get an invitation in the coming weeks. All parents and carers linked to our team are very welcome.

Family Forum survey

We'd love to hear your thoughts on our family forums, whether you attend them or not. Please scan the QR code or click on the link below to access our survey. It will only take 2 minutes to complete. The **deadline for feedback is 31 May 2026**. Thank you.

[CDNT 3 \(St Columba's\) - survey on family forums and family engagement](#)



Community supports

The **AsIAM Community Hub** is a welcoming local space where autistic people and their families can get information, advice, and peer support in a positive, non-clinical setting.

It provides advice clinics for autistic adults, and runs social groups for children and young people from ages 3-6 years; 7-10 years; 10-12 years; 13-17 years; 18+ years; as well as for parents: <https://asiam.ie/what-we-do/community-hubs/community-support-hub-2>

Team activities



We have run the following workshops for parents this year:

- Communication
- Emotional regulation (supporting your child's participation in daily activities)
- Hanen More Than Words (for parents of young children with communication differences)
- Parents Plus Special Need (an evidence-based support programme)
- What's next (information on your young person's progression into adulthood).

Below is some **feedback from parents on what benefits they got from attending:**

- *"It gave me the chance to pause and reflect"*
- *"Learning to 'respond' vs 'react'"*
- *"Meeting other parents, hearing their experiences, their struggles, knowing I am not the only one with difficulties, supportive place"*
- *"Enjoying the small wins".*

Calendar of events

Our **Teen life Programme** is coming to an end. It is a six-week programme for parents or carers of autistic young people aged 10 to 16 years. It aims to empower parents to understand more about how autism is experienced by autistic teenagers. Topics covered include stress and anxiety; behaviour; puberty, independence skills; education strategies; and planning for the future.

We are planning a **Cygnets Programme**, which is for parents or carers of autistic children and young people. It gives them a chance to develop their understanding of autism and consider ways to support their child or young person. It also provides the opportunity to meet other people in a similar position. Invites will be sent to parents this programme would be relevant to.