



Kids' Own

Annual Activity Report

2022

**kids
own**
PUBLISHING PARTNERSHIP

kidsown.ie

About Kids' Own

Kids' Own is a children's art organisation and publishing house and Ireland's only dedicated publisher of books by children, for children. Kids' Own works in defence of children's right to culture and supports their individual creative expression through publishing and the arts. Kids' Own is driven by a passionate belief in the intrinsic value of the arts in children's lives, as a source of joy, fulfilment and connection. We work to give children greater access to cultural expression and to be actively creating, enquiring, communicating and making meaning through the arts.

Our vision is for a society that recognises children as independent writers, thinkers and creators and that truly values the arts in the lives of all children. Our mission is to develop, publish and promote artwork and writing created by children for children and their communities through meaningful engagement with professional artists.

Strategic Aims

Aim 1: Engagement and co-creation

Increase opportunities for children to develop artwork and writing through meaningful engagement with professional artists.

Aim 2: Visibility of Children's Work

Increase the visibility of children's artwork and writing through publishing, exhibition and dissemination.

Aim 3: Professional Arts Practice with Children

Strengthen the practice of artists and other professionals who work with children.

Aim 4: Research and Advocacy

Strive to build evidence and lead change towards children's inclusion as active creators.

Aim 5: Building Internal Capacity

Ensure that Kids' Own has the capacity to achieve its strategic aims.

Organisation and Governance

Legal Structure

Kids' Own is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee and a registered charity.

Company Number

508465

Tax Registration Number

9822769G (not VAT registered)

Charity Registration Number

20082190

Board Members:

In 2022, Kids' Own had 5 board members:

Carmel Brennan

Liz Coman

Naomi Feely (Chair from 26th of August 2022)

Tommy Flavin (appointed August 2022)

Jennifer Hennessy (Chair until 26th August 2022)

Michael Kirby (Treasurer)

Election of Board Members

Kids' Own's Constitution sets out the following rules for election/appointment of board members:

To qualify for appointment, a director must be nominated and seconded for the position by existing directors. Nominations must be in writing, received at the registered office at least two weeks before the board meeting at which the appointment is to be made.

And for Terms of Directors:

Directors shall be appointed for a term of three years and shall thereafter be eligible for reappointment for a further period of three years, but shall then retire.

The Role of the Board

The key role of the board of Kids' Own is to provide leadership to the organisation by setting strategic direction and ensuring policies are in place that support this direction.

The board also:

Approves, monitors and reviews the work programme to ensure it is effectively meeting the agreed objectives and performance indicators.

Protects and represents the interests of Kids' Own and is accountable to the membership.

Ensures a framework of prudent and effective controls are in place for the work of Kids' Own.

Discharges its responsibilities in accordance with the defining rules of the organisation.

Board Meetings

The board of Kids' Own met on the following dates in 2022:

28th February, 7th March (special board meeting), 13th May, 26th August, 2nd September (special board meeting) 18th November. The AGM was held on the 26th August.

Governance Standards

As a registered charity and publicly funded not-for-profit organisation, Kids' Own is wholly committed to fulfilling best practice requirements in relation to the governance of our organisation. In 2020, our Board dedicated particular focus to ensuring full compliance with the Governance Code issued by the Charities Regulator in November 2018 and is delighted to now have a framework within which to continue operating to the highest standards of governance.

The Kids' Own Board

Tommy Flavin (Appointed in August 2022)

Tommy Flavin is the Founder and Creative Director of The Reelists, a full-service video production company. Through his company, he works with a wide variety of charities and nonprofits, helping them develop campaigns and tell their stories to the general public. This work with nonprofits motivated him to become more directly involved in the sector. As someone who was raised from a young age with a passion for the written word, Kids' Own was a natural fit. As a Board Director, Tommy looks forward to using his communications experience to help further Kids' Own's important mission.

Naomi Feely

Naomi Feely is an experienced social researcher and policy analyst with over 15 years' experience working in the public, not-for-profit and private sectors in Ireland. She has carried out research in the areas of early childhood care and education, low-income families, income adequacy, childhood disadvantage and ageing. She has worked for leading not-for-profit organisations such as Age Action, Barnardos and Start Strong. Naomi has a strong interest in philanthropy and is finalising her doctoral thesis on this topic. Naomi holds a BA in Public Administration, an MA in Sociology and a second MA in Political and Public Communications.

Carmel Brennan

Dr. Carmel Brennan recently retired as Head of Training and Practice with Early Childhood Ireland, where she had responsibility for the organisation's work in developing curriculum, improving practice and supporting services to work with the national frameworks. She now works as a part-time lecturer at Maynooth University on the degree and masters in early childhood education programmes. Her research interests are in the areas of curriculum and particularly children's play – the subject of her PhD thesis. More recently, she focuses on children's co-construction of stories through play and the relationship between play and artistic enquiry in children's lives.

Michael Kirby

Michael has almost three decades of experience working in the private sector in the U.S., England, and Ireland and, since 2001, is a Partner of business and management consultancy firm Meehan Tully & Associates Ltd. He holds a B.A. from Villanova University, a M.A. in International Relations from St. John's University, New York, and a MBA from Trinity College Dublin. Michael has extensive professional experience of the not-for-profit sector and is actively involved in a number of organisations in a voluntary capacity.

Liz Coman

Liz Coman is an Assistant Arts Officer with Dublin City Council and a Visual Arts Education Curator. Liz has a Masters in History of Art and in Museum Studies, with a focus on public programming. She has led trainings in enquiry-led approaches to mediating artwork for visual art facilitators in The Ark, A Cultural Centre for Children, The National Gallery of Ireland, and The Turner Prize, Derry and offers ongoing mentorship for individual artists and educators. She is a certified Visual Thinking Strategies facilitator with VTS/USA and has completed training to coaching level.

Liz is writer of the first Arts, Education and Learning Policy for Dublin City Council and through her work at the arts office, she designs and evaluates supports for artists – including awards, bursaries and studio spaces. A key aspect of her role is to grow resources through strategic partnerships and budget management by being alert to funding opportunities based on an extensive knowledge of local, national and international funding infrastructure.

Jennifer Hennessy

Jennifer is Regional Manager for the Dublin and East Region at Clann Credo, Ireland's largest Social Finance Provider. Jennifer has a background in finance and banking. In her role with Clann Credo she has worked with hundreds of non-profit organisations including many arts organisations. Jennifer has a keen interest in art and recently received a Diploma in Art and Design from NCAD. She has her own art practice and is part of an artists' collective called Artists L9.

Overview of our programme in 2022

2022 was a busy and successful year of projects, book launches and events, and also marked the 25th anniversary of Kids' Own. The Board of Directors was delighted to announce the appointment of Ciara Gallagher to the post of Chief Executive Officer/ Creative Director in August. Ciara has worked with Kids' Own since 2018 as project manager and has been involved in many aspects of the organisation's development over these years. In 2022 we also announced two new appointments to the Kids' Own Board: Tommy Flavin, who joined in September, and Liz Coman, who joined at the end of 2021.

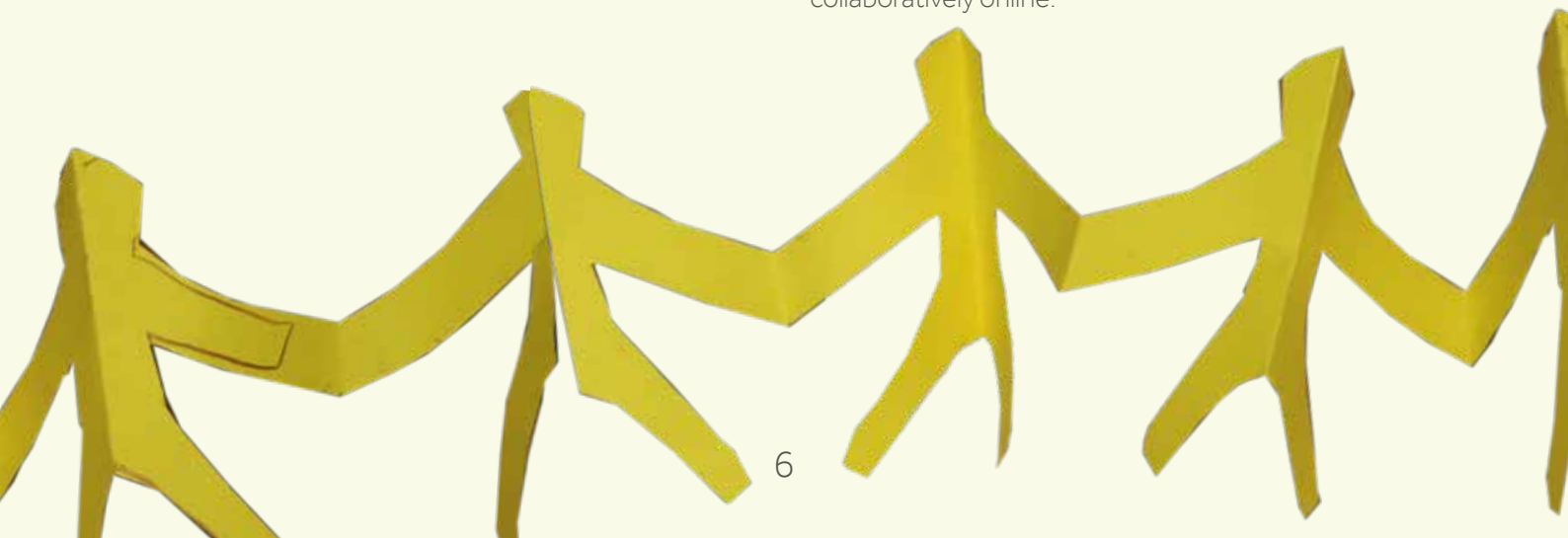
In November, we hosted an anniversary conference at The Model, Sligo, celebrating 25 years of publishing young people's voices and artwork, with many of Kids' Own's previous and current associates and collaborators in attendance. We reflected on the work of Kids' Own and its place within the wider sector through insightful panels, discussions and workshops covering multiple topics, such as early years, children's creativity, social inclusion, children's rights and more.

We continued to develop collaborative work with young people across different age groups and from different communities, and published three new books: *Love is Love: A book about teen queer experiences by young people from Sligo and Leitrim*; *Kind Hearts: A book about our lives by children from Syrian families living in Co Wexford*; and *My Own Jungle: Experiences of children in care in Sligo and Leitrim*.

As always, working in partnership with other organisations was an essential element in our work. We continued to work with Cork Traveller Visibility Group and the Cork STAR (Supporting Traveller and Roma) school pilot project on a publishing project with Traveller and Roma children in Cork. In August we worked with Foster Care Resource Service Sligo, Leitrim, and West Cavan Area on The Children Who Foster project, a collaborative project with children of families that foster. In May, we delivered workshops for young people active with Down Syndrome Sligo, Mayo and Leitrim. We also worked with Cranmore Community Co-Operative Society to develop Green Futures, an artist in residency project deeply in line with Kids' Own's commitment to Climate Action as an area of priority within our work. Green Futures also recognises the crucial role that children can have in shaping their own futures and as equal and active citizens in our society. We continued to work in partnership with schools, libraries, and youth groups, among others.

We continued to manage the Arts in Education Portal, on behalf of the Portal Committee, and so continued to support the sector through wide-ranging work, including delivery of the annual Arts in Education conference at TU Dublin.

We also worked with the Teacher-Artist Partnership (TAP) Programme to develop a series of videos, as part of a wider initiative aiming to support teacher-artist pairs in documenting and engaging collaboratively online.



Aim 1

Create opportunities for children and artists to work together

Increase opportunities for children to develop artwork and writing through meaningful engagement with professional artists, and in community with each other.

Throughout 2022, a wide range of projects provided spaces and opportunities for children and young people to connect with professional artists, offering a platform for self-expression and the development of their voices and artwork.



Young Writers

Kids' Own Young Writers project began in 2018. Designed as a long-term writing project that would support and nurture young writers, the latest stage of this project took place in early 2022. Kids' Own Associate Writer, Mary Branley facilitated a programme of sessions that culminated with an evening of Poetry & Prose with the Young Writers group. Young writers from Letterkenny and Londonderry/Derry read their new poetry and prose to an encouraging audience of family and peers. We were excited to invite Susanna Galbraith, poet and editor of Abridged Magazine, to host the evening. She and the young writers discussed creativity and youth culture, as well as sharing their most recent writing work. The project continued throughout the year with writing workshops, centred on facilitating the development of pieces for an anthology publication. Later in the year, the group met in Derry Central Library to make podcasts about their work. Their readings were edited into a series of podcasts to showcase their creativity and work, featuring poetry, non-fiction and extracts from short stories.



Artists: Mary Branley, Susanna Galbraith.
Partners: Donegal County Library Service; Libraries NI
Funders: Reconciliation Fund (Department of Foreign Affairs)
Participants: Young people from Donegal and Derry.
Participant numbers: 40
Dates: Throughout 2022
Venue: Online; Derry Central Library; Letterkenny Library

Right by Us

Right By Us looked at the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child with a group of young people based in Sligo. Over two workshops, Associate Artist Sarah Lundy and Associate Writer Mary Branley worked with the young people to help them identify strands of the Strategy that are most relevant to them. In the workshops, participants were introduced to the six areas of the European Child Guarantee and worked together to prioritise them within the context of their own unique lived experiences. Using art materials, the participants explored their feelings about the European Child Guarantee, voicing their opinions and ideas on it in a creative, open manner. A video exploring the project process was created as a result.

Artists: Sarah Lundy; Mary Branley.
Partners: Children's Rights Alliance.
Funders: Department of Foreign Affairs Communicating Europe Initiative.
Participants: Local children aged 12-16 who had an interest in their rights.
Participant numbers: 8
Dates: Throughout 2022
Venue: January 2022



Our Lives, Our Voices

In 2022, we continued to work with children and young people in Cork on the Our Lives, Our Voices project, in partnership with Cork Traveller Visibility Group, the Irish Traveller Movement, and the Cork STAR (Supporting Traveller and Roma) Pilot Project. This is a children's publishing initiative that puts the voices of children from Traveller and Roma communities at the centre of the creative representation of their identities. We believe that children's voices must be a part of reducing inequality, and that creativity can offer a safe, joyful, fulfilling way for children to be heard.

The young people met on a weekly basis to work collaboratively with our Associate Artists Francesca Hutchinson and Danny Brennan, under the guidance of mentor Mary Branley. Using a wide variety of art materials, they engaged in an extended creative process to create a child-authored, non-fiction book which celebrates their lives and experiences.

Artists: Francesca Hutchinson, Danny Brennan, Mary Branley

Partners: Cork Traveller Visibility Group

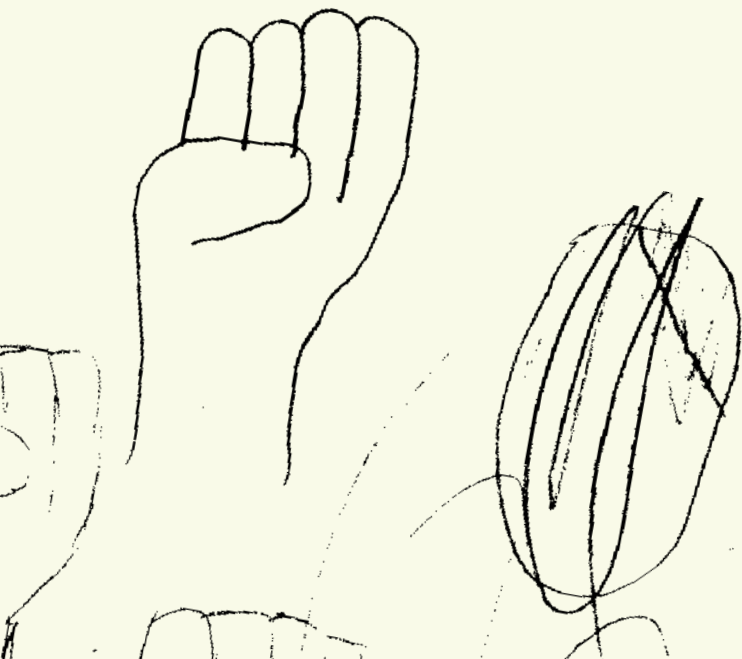
Funders: Toy Show Appeal, TUSLA Education Support Service, Cork Traveller Visibility Group, Cork STAR Pilot project

Participants: Traveller and Roma young people from Cork.

Participant numbers: 40

Dates: Throughout 2022

Venue: Artlink, Cork City.



Really Here: Virtual artist-in-residence project

We were excited to start *Really Here* in 2022, a new virtual artist-in-residence programme building on long-term relationships nurtured between schools and Associate Artists during our *Virtually There* programme. In this collaborative arts project, Kids' Own Associate Artists Ann Henderson, Ann Donnelly and Sharon Kelly worked creatively with schools in Northern Ireland on a weekly basis. The project took place primarily online, with occasional physical visits by the artist to the school. The creative sessions were hosted by the class teacher and the artist, and supported the children to work creatively and collaboratively through process- and enquiry-based approaches that expose them to professional art practices, while also supporting their learning through many cross-curricular strands.



Artists: Ann Henderson; Ann Donnelly; Sharon Kelly;

Partners: St Patricks primary school Armagh; Donaghey Primary School Cookstown; Ballydown Primary School Banbridge.

Funders: ACNI Lottery Project Funding

Participants: Children living in Northern Ireland via their schools.

Participant numbers: 103

Dates: January to June 2022

Venue: St Patricks primary school Armagh; Donaghey Primary School Cookstown; Ballydown Primary School Banbridge.

Big Little Library Project: This is Me

In May 2022, artist Karina Nachbar and writer Mary Branley engaged with 12 schools and approximately 256 young people in Dublin libraries to make books. This community publishing initiative with school children took place in Coolock, Cabra and Ballyfermot libraries. The artist and writer provided a space for local school children – within the democratic environment of their local library – to make books, and to develop artwork and stories that explore themes of identity and belonging, nature and the built environment, community and connectivity, and diversity of language and experience. A conversational approach with the writer allowed the children to talk openly and freely about their own experiences and ideas. A video featuring images and audio from the project was also developed to showcase the children's work and voices.

Artists: Karina Nachbar; Mary Branley

Partners: Coolock, Cabra and Ballyfermot libraries

Funders: Dublin City Council's Creative Hubs; Dublin City Libraries

Participants: Children from 12 schools in the Dublin area

Participant numbers: 256

Dates: May 2022

Venue: Coolock, Cabra and Ballyfermot libraries



Hearts and Minds Project

In May 2022 we facilitated creative workshops with young people who are active with Down Syndrome Sligo, Mayo and Leitrim. Individual children and their families worked alongside two professional artists, Sarah Ellen Lundy and Alex MacNaughton, to explore how to nurture emotional wellbeing and positive self-image through creative activity. Kids' Own developed a short, fold-out project publication as a result of the creative workshops which explored the process of the project and advocates for the importance of all children having a voice and a way to explore their emotional wellbeing.

Artists: Sarah Ellen Lundy; Alex MacNaughton

Partners: Down Syndrome Sligo, Mayo and Leitrim

Funders: Bank of Ireland Begin Together Fund and The Community Foundation for Ireland.

Participants: Young people active with Down Syndrome Sligo, Mayo and Leitrim

Participant numbers: 6

Dates: May 2022

Venue: Northside Community Centre, Sligo.



Green Futures

Green Futures was a new artist-in-residency project and a collaboration between Kids' Own and Cranmore Community Co-Op, Sligo. Associate Artist Sarah Lundy, whose practice is deeply connected with the natural world and questions of environmental justice worked with two groups of children and young people during summer 2022 in the Cranmore Community Co-Op Gardens.



The project built on the success of our 2021 Creative Sligo-funded project, by extending and deepening engagement among children in Sligo town; this time we developed a new partnership with Cranmore Community Co-Op, assisted by Dr Connie Nell, Community Development Worker. Green Futures provided an opportunity for a group of children and young people to work collaboratively with a professional artist within their local environment, while exploring important themes and ideas that connect to Climate Action in the Cranmore Co-Op Community Garden. As part of this project, artist Sarah also had paid studio time to develop and explore her own practice in response to the work she was doing with children and young people; a limited-edition bookmark was created as part of this.

Artist: Sarah Ellen Lundy

Partners: Cranmore Community Co-Operative, Dr Connie Nell, Lisa Wallace

Funders: Creative Sligo

Participants: Children aged 8-13 years

Participant numbers: 18

Dates: July and August 2022

Venue: Cranmore Community Co-Op gardens.

Children Who Foster

In August 2022 we began a wonderful project with the children of families that foster. A group of young people took part in several workshops with two of our Associate Artists, artist Karina Nachbar and writer Mary Branley, to produce a book on their experiences of living in a family that fosters children. We worked together with the children through a meaningful and collaborative process, to listen and then create a book that reflects their voices and experiences. A range of art activities took place, including the creation of stop-motion animation videos with Karina. Mary spoke with the children about their experiences of having foster siblings, listening to their everyday stories and their likes and dislikes. The project book is due for publication in 2023.

Artists: Karina Nachbar, Mary Branley.

Partners: Foster Care Resource Service Sligo, Leitrim, and West Cavan Area

Funders: The TUSLA Children's Participation Seed Fund.

Participants: Young people connected with Foster Care Resource Service

Participant numbers: 7

Dates: August 2022

Venue: Northside Community Centre, Sligo

Blackberry Ink

In October 2022, in response to the UN Day for the Eradication of Poverty, we partnered with Cranmore Community Co-Op to host a series of workshops with young people, led by artist Sarah Lundy. Responding to the 2022 theme of "Respecting the Dignity of all Humanity: End Persistent Poverty", the young people explored sometimes difficult subjects in a friendly, creative and supportive environment, through art-based activities. During the first workshop, we delved into the themes of poverty, dignity, and respect for others; in our second session, we explored the themes using bees as an example of a community working together. A video that features the children's thoughts and artwork was created as a result.

Artist: Sarah Ellen Lundy

Partners: Cranmore Community Co-Operative

Funder: Department of Social Protection

Participants: children and young people in the Cranmore area

Participant numbers: 15

Dates: October 2022

Venue: Cranmore Community Co-Op gardens.



Collaborative Book Project with St Cecilia's School

This year we were delighted to begin a new project with St Cecilia's School in Sligo, that aimed to ensure that young people with learning disabilities have a positive means of creative expression.

Artist Anna Spearman began collaborative work with a group of students at the school with the goal of ensuring they could explore lots of different media and processes to express their voices and creativity in new ways. This work will be developed into a book publication in 2023.

Artists: Sarah Ellen Lundy

Partners: Cranmore Community Co-Operative

Funder: Movement for Good

Participants: Young people at St Cecilia's School, Sligo Town

Participant numbers: 10

Dates: Throughout 2023

Venue: St Cecilia's School, Sligo.



Aim 2

Give visibility to children's artwork and writing



The World Moving

In February 2022, we published *The World Moving*, a new climate action resource for teachers. This colourful resource was developed in 2021 in response to a pilot art project with children, exploring climate action through the theme of water. This A2-size poster is packed with ideas for the classroom in which children can engage with their local area and themes of climate action. Using discussion, research, art activity and field walks, this creative resource provides stimuli that encourage children to be active in directing their learning.



Artists: Jo Holmwood; Vanya Lambrecht Ward
Partners: Sligo Environmental Network
Funder: Creative Ireland Sligo
Participants: Young people at St Cecilia's School, Sligo Town
Participant numbers: 10
Dates: Throughout 2023
Venue: Resource published February 2022

A-Z: Alphabet of Actions project

In Summer 2022, we published *A-Z Alphabet of Actions: Findings from a Pilot Early Years Initiative*, a foldout publication for an early-years intervention project putting arts and creativity at the centre of early childhood learning. The early stages of the project took place during strict lockdowns in 2020 and 2021 and were designed to facilitate parent-child interactions. The project modelled a way of working that supported young children to manipulate and play openly with materials and connected them with their parents and other children through verbal and non-verbal communication. Artist Naomi Draper designed a material environment that allowed for different 'layers' of entry, to accommodate children at a very early stage of literacy as well as those in primary education. This project investigated how children of different ages and stages of literacy interacted with the materials.



As part of this project, the Kids' Own classic title "A-Z and Back Again" was reprinted and disseminated widely. We were delighted to provide a copy of this book to every attendee at the European Conference on Literacy, which took place in DCU in July 2022.

Artist: Naomi Draper
Partners: The Sligo County Childcare Committee, Children & Young People's Service Committee (CYPSC)
Funders: ESB Energy for Generations
Participants: Parents and their children across county Sligo.
Date: Project publication published in Summer 2022.

Supporting Scoil Ursula's publication project

Kids' Own was delighted to partner with Scoil Ursula, Sligo to support a whole-school initiative, to support the development of a book, *Our World*, which explored the work of 17 class groups over two years of the Creative Schools initiative.

Partners: Scoil Ursula; Creative Schools

Funder: Creative Schools

Participant numbers: 10

Date: May 2022.



Love is Love

In July 2022, we launched *Love is Love: A book about teen queer experiences by Young People from Sligo and Leitrim*. This book was created by LGBTQIA+ young people from Sligo and Leitrim, in partnership with Youth Work Ireland North Connaught's SMILY LGBTI youth group, as well as other young LGBTQIA+ people from the region. Since 2019, Kids' Own has partnered with the SMILY LGBTI+ youth group and has designed and facilitated creative projects to allow young people to explore and express their experiences, thoughts, and identity through conversation, writing and contemporary art. Funded by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth through the LGBTI+ Strategy Funding, these projects allow young people from counties Sligo and Leitrim to come together, online and in person, to have their voices heard.



Artist: Andy Parsons, Mary Branley

Partners: Youth Work Ireland North Connaught's SMILY LGBTI+ youth group

Funders: : the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth through the LGBTI+ Strategy Funding

Participants: SMILY LGBTI+ youth group

Date: July 2022

Venue: The Model Sligo

My Own Jungle

In 2022 we published My Own Jungle, a book sharing the voices and experiences of young people living in foster care. During workshops in 2021, writer Mary Branley and artist Sharon Kelly worked with a group of children in care, playing, having fun and sharing stories together. My Own Jungle uniquely captures and shares these powerful stories, raising awareness of how it feels and what it means to live in this very particular context.

Artists: Mary Branley, Sharon Kelly

Partners: Sligo Leitrim Home Youth Liaison Service

Funders: The TUSLA Children's Participation Seed Fund.

Participants: Young people from Sligo Leitrim HYLs

Dates: June 2022

Venue: The Model, Sligo



Right by Us Project Video

In January 2022, we began working with a group of young people in the Northside Community Centre in Sligo to develop the Right By Us project. Through a series of creative processes with artist Sarah Lundy and writer Mary Branley, the group explored and responded to the European Child Guarantee, which aims to ensure 'that every child in Europe at risk of poverty or social exclusion has access to the most basic of rights like healthcare and education'. Reflecting on this strategy through oil and chalk pastels, the young people identified strands most relevant to them; their work is documented in this project video.

Artist: Sarah Ellen Lundy, Mary Branley

Funders: The Department of Foreign Affairs, through the Communicating Europe Initiative

Participants: Young people ages 14 -17 years

Kind Hearts

In October 2022, we launched Kind Hearts, a book written by young people from Syria living with their families in County Wexford, in collaboration with artists Sarah Fuller, Helen Flanagan and writer Mary Branley. The book was developed in 2021, during a story-making, writing, and publishing project for young people. The outcome is Kind Hearts, a child-authored, non-fiction book which celebrates their lives and experiences. It was launched by Counsellor George Lawlor from Wexford County Council with a speech commending the young people involved. The children and young people who created the book were guests of honour, and shared readings of their work with an audience of family, friends and community members.

Artist: Sarah Fuller, Helen Flanagan, Mary Branley

Partners: Wexford Local Development, Wexford Public Library Service

Funders: Wexford Public Library Service and the Dormant Accounts Fund

Dates: 1st October 2022.

Venue: Wexford Library



Culture Night Sligo 2022

Kids' Own celebrated Culture Night with Cranmore Community Co-Op, with an exhibition of our work from the Green Futures project and a workshop with artist Sarah Lundy in the Co-Op gardens. Following on from our work earlier in the year, we continued to explore ideas about the environment, nature, and animals through art.

Artist: Sarah Ellen Lundy

Partners: Cranmore Community Co-Op, Dr Connie Nell, Lisa Wallace

Funders: Creative Sligo

Participants: members of the Green Futures project and members of the public.

Dates: 23rd of September 2022

Venue: Cranmore Community Co-Op Gardens.

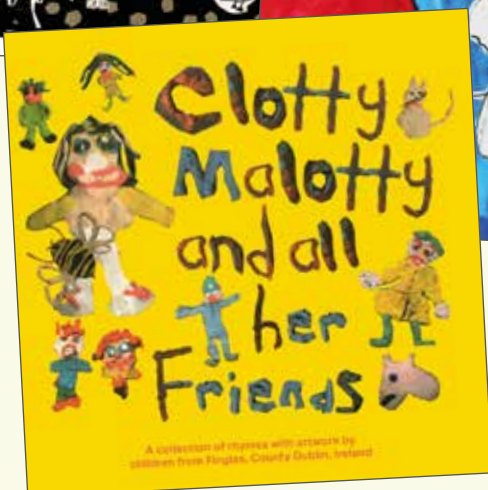


Kids' Own Classic Reprints

In 2022, we were delighted to reprint three classic Kids' Own titles, funded by the Arts Council: Charlie Barley and All His Friends; Clotty Malotty and All Her Friends; Starting School (give full titles). Charlie Barley (2001) and Clotty Malotty (2002) hold a special place in Kids' Own's heart as these were the first mass printed books made by Kids' Own, and the first made with Traveller children. Both books are collections of nursery rhymes and poems from the Traveller community. This is the first time these books have been reprinted since their initial publication; the books include new introductions from Kids' Own writer Mary Branley, and Winnie McDonagh, who were involved in the original book making projects, as well as a new foreword from artist Leanne McDonagh on the books' continuing value.

Starting School was made with four and five year old children in Kilkenny in 2015 and gives an insight into this important transition into primary schools, from the perspective of young children.

Funder: Arts Council of Ireland



Blackberry Ink Project Video

To mark the UN Day for the Eradication of Poverty and the theme "Respecting the Dignity of all Humanity: End Persistent Poverty", artist Sarah Lundy worked with a group of young people at Cranmore Community Co-Op over a number of creative sessions to explore these of poverty, dignity, and respect for others. This video gives an insight into their voices and responses to the themes: <https://kidsown.ie/blackberry-ink-project-video-marking-un-day-for-the-eradication-of-poverty/>

Partners: Cranmore Community Co-Op

Funders: Department of Social Protection

Dates: October 2022



Aim 3

Support professional artists in their practice with children

Support and develop the practice of artists and other professionals who work with children and young people; provide a leading model of best practice within the sector.



The Arts in Education Portal

On behalf of the Portal Committee, Kids' Own continued to manage the Arts in Education Portal. In 2022, Kids' Own continued to manage the Arts in Education Portal on behalf of the Portal Committee. The Arts in Education Portal is the key national digital resource of arts in education practice in Ireland. Throughout 2021, Kids' Own continued to bring our critical knowledge of the sector to our continued management and development of the Arts in Education Portal and to promote excellence of practice through this resource.

The Portal is live at www.artsineducation.ie



Portal events and activity:

- **Spring Regional Day:** The sixth of our annual Portal Regional Days showcased arts in education and creative practice in the Mid-East. The 2022 gathering took place in the Kildare Education Support Centre and was particularly special, as the first in-person event in two years.
- **National Day:** The seventh annual National Arts in Education Portal Day took place in TU Dublin, the first in person since 2019. With a special focus on 'Seldom Heard Voices', the day included presentations, discussions and creative workshops addressing this theme.
- **A New Strategic Plan:** At the National Day, the Portal released its new plan: 'A Community of Practice: A five-year strategy for the Arts in Education Portal, Ireland's national resource for arts and creativity in education'.
- **Documentation Awards:** two arts-in-education projects were awarded the chance to document their work through film and photography.
- We commissioned content from others in the sector, including guest blogs.

Teacher-Artist Partnership (TAP) Special Initiative

We were delighted to launch a video series developed as part of a special initiative created in partnership with the Teacher-Artist Partnership (TAP) Programme. These videos form part of a wider initiative aiming to support teacher-artist pairs in documenting and engaging collaboratively online.

The video resource explores 4 different questions:

- Why is the Teacher-Artist relationship important?
- Why is it important to document your projects?
- What is the value of the arts in the classroom?
- What does a child-led process look like?

The four videos feature the Teacher-Artist pairs who participated in the 2001 TAP Special Initiative Project which took place over 2021.

Funders: Creative Ireland Programme – Creative Youth

Date: videos published throughout 2022



Studio time for artists

Kids' Own supports the provision of paid studio time for artists, where possible, so that they can reflect and expand on their own practice, as a result of working with children and young people. This year, as part of the Green Futures project, artist Sarah Lundy had some time in her studio to reflect on and develop her own practice in response to working collaboratively with children on this project. Read more here: <https://kidsown.ie/artist-sarah-lundy-reflection-on-green-futures-project/>

Writing Mentor

Long-term Associate Writer Mary Branley continued to provide valuable support and expertise to new writers and artists working collaboratively on Kids' Own projects in 2022. Mary took part in new book projects and provided follow-up mentoring for artists and writers. This role was generously funded by an Arts Council Capacity Building grant.

Kids' Own 25 Year Conference

Kids' Own turned 25 in 2022, and we celebrated with a special anniversary conference at The Model, Sligo in November. Through a combination of panels, discussions and creative workshops, we celebrated over two days with associate artists, policy makers, educators, social and community workers and many other sectoral workers. Our dedicated youth panel was led by Mary Branley, associate writer and long-time Kids' Own collaborator, and show-cased the voices and reflections of those at the heart of Kids' Own's work. We were delighted to welcome Dr. Bryonie Reid from Quarto Collective as conference rapporteur, as we explored and discussed the impact of Kids' Own's work and the work of the organisations we work in partnership with.

Funder: The Arts Council of Ireland

Date: 25th November 2022

Venue: The Model, Sligo



Aim 4

Advocate for children's equal status as artists and writers

Support and develop the practice of artists and other professionals who work with children and young people; provide a leading model of best practice within the sector.



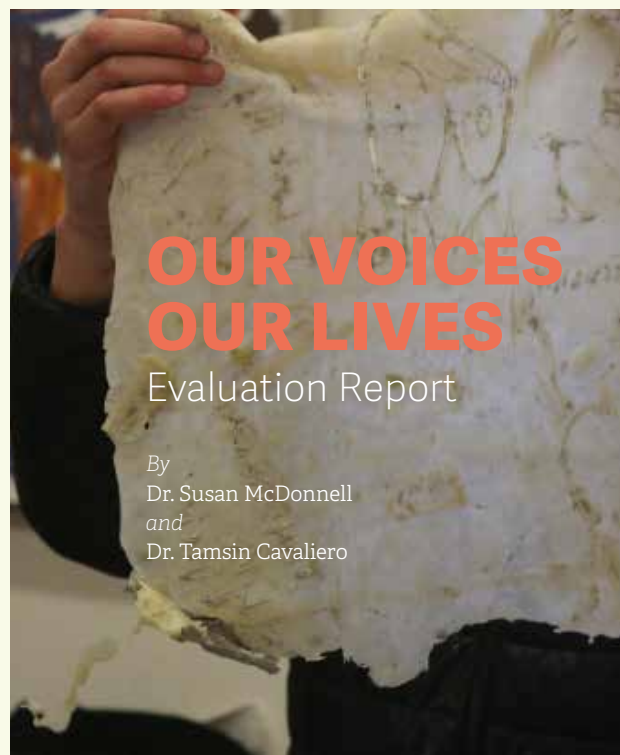
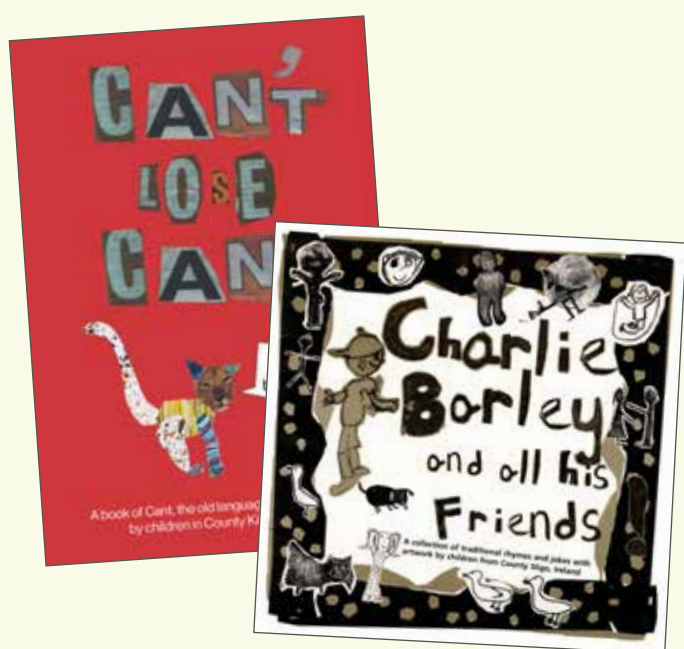
Kids' Own present at DICE Conference

In early 2022 we were honoured to present at the DICE Conference, in a session titled 'Traveller Voices in Irish Education'. Creative Director Jo Holmwood and Associate Writer Mary Branley spoke about Kids' Own's work with Traveller children and communities, developing books and resources over 20 years, starting with *Charlie Barley* in 2001. Kids' Own were part of a panel of speakers including Teacher Activist Annemarie Collins; Traveller Activist Kathleen Murphy and Miriam Colum, Lecturer at MIE. The panel discussion was chaired by Dr. Barbara O'Toole, Senior Lecturer in Education, MIE. Jo gave an overview of our organisation – our vision, mission and ethos – and the range of our work in different contexts, with a focus on collaboration and the child's voice. Mary then spoke more specifically about the publications in the 'Unheard Voices' series which include *Can't Lose Cant*, *Cant Turn Back* and others.

DICE is a collaborative Development and Inter-Cultural Education project for initial teacher training in Marino IoE, Mary I. College, Maynooth University & DCU.

Dates: February 16th 2022.

Venue: Marino Institute of Education, Dublin



Research component of Our Lives Our Voices project.

In early 2022 we announced our new researchers, Tamsin Cavaliero and Susan McDonnell, who began exploring the impact of the *Our Lives, Our Voices* project on participants from a rights-based perspective. Their research focused on creativity and the arts as means of articulating and realising rights and explored the impact on participants in a child-led book project that focused on their lives, voices, and creative expressions. They also researched the effect of child-led publications on other children, particularly those who are not typically represented in books and educational materials.

Researcher: Dr Tamsin Cavaliero;

Dr Susan McDonnell

Partners: Irish Traveller Movement; Cork Traveller Visibility Group

Funders: The Toy Show Appeal and The Community Foundation of Ireland

Participants: Traveller and Roma children and young people participating in a Cork-based creative publishing project.

Participant numbers: 40

Dates: February – June 2022.

Venue: TVG Traveller Visibility Group Cork.

Aim 5

Build Our Capacity

Translate our ambition into tangible and measurable impacts, by ensuring the necessary resources, processes and structures are in place.



Kids' Own Appoints New CEO/Creative Director

The Board of Directors of Kids' Own Publishing Partnership was delighted to announce the appointment of Ciara Gallagher to the post of Chief Executive Officer/Creative Director.



Ciara has been working with Kids' Own since 2018 as project manager and has been involved in various aspects of the organisation's development over these years. Ciara has a background in academia, including postdoctoral research on children's books.



The Kids' Own team and board commended the work of outgoing CEO/Creative Director Jo Holmwood, as she left the position in June. Jo had a central role in Kids' Own over a period of 13 years. During her time as Creative Director, she facilitated significant development of the organisation, growing its reach and impact substantially, while ensuring Kids' Own's ethos and artistic integrity remained at the heart of all the work.

We also welcomed two new staff members Lorna Kavanagh was appointed as Project Manager and Katie Whelan was appointed Digital Marketing Officer. Emma Kavanagh, who has worked with Kids' Own since 2017, was appointed as Operations Manager.



Work with Education Advisor and Writing Mentor Continues

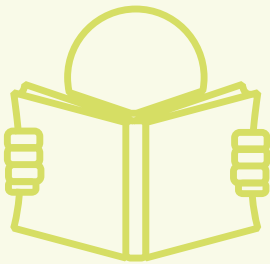
Kids' Own was delighted to receive funding to appoint an Education Advisor and Writing Mentor through an Arts Council Capacity Building Grant for 2021/22. Dr Bernadette Ní Áingléis continued her role as Education Advisor with Kids' Own, developing and expanding links with teachers, schools, and academics. As outlined under Aim 3, "Professional Arts Practice with Children", Mary Branley was appointed writing mentor for new Kids' Own Artists and Writers who joined Kids' Own's panel in 2021. This role ensured our new artists and writers were supported in the development of their artistic practice as it intersects with Kids' Own's ethos and methodology.

Achievements and Outputs



1807

Kids' Own video views



7410

Book audience



11,140

Online audience

22,295

Portal users



608

Children and young people through direction engagement and co-creation



3206

Children and parents as public audiences for our work



350

Sector professionals



6 Books published

Executive Team

Creative Director/CEO

Ciara Gallagher

Ciara's background is in third-level education in the Arts and Humanities, including postdoctoral research in children's literature and culture and she has taught in several universities in Ireland. As Creative Director and CEO, she is responsible for the creative direction of Kids' Own, successful delivery of the organisation's strategic plan, sound governance and financial stability, fundraising, HR and sustainability.

Operations Manager

Emma Kavanagh

Emma holds a Bachelor of Design from NCAD and an Honours Postgraduate Diploma in Arts Policy & Practice from NUI Galway and has been working in the professional arts and cultural sector since 2009, with a particular focus on digital media. Since joining Kids' Own in 2016, Emma has been involved in the management and development of the Arts in Education Portal, on behalf of the Portal Editorial Committee. Emma moved into the role of Digital Content Manager in 2018, where she was responsible for the management of the Arts in Education Portal, focused on building online and offline space through the Portal where artists and teachers working collaboratively with children and young people within education can be supported and inspired. In her current role as Operations Manager with Kids' Own, Emma works alongside the CEO and Creative Director, supporting the smooth running of operational activities.

Project Manager

Lorna Kavanagh

Lorna trained as a potter at Grennan Mill in Kilkenny with The Crafts Council of Ireland and holds a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Fine Art Ceramics from GMIT. A Graduate Diploma in Community Art and Education from NCAD cemented Lorna's passion for education within the arts. After working with The Model, Sligo, and Dublin City Gallery The Hugh Lane as an Education Assistant, Lorna moved to Rua Red Arts Centre in Dublin, where she was Education

Executive for some years. Within her role as Project Manager, Lorna works alongside the Director to devise, plan and facilitate dynamic projects that engage all communities of young people.

Digital Marketing Officer

Katie Whelan

Katie is a content creator and digital artist who graduated from Munster Technological University (MTU) in 2019 with a BA(Hons) in Creative Digital Media. Katie has had a passion for art and the performing arts from an early age. She uses digital and traditional art to bring stories and characters to life. In 2022, Katie graduated from MTU with an MSc in Digital Marketing Strategy, where she developed her online brand and optimised content for social media platforms. She has worked as a volunteer graphic designer for the Cork Nature Network and as a freelance content creator.

Arts in Education Portal Manager

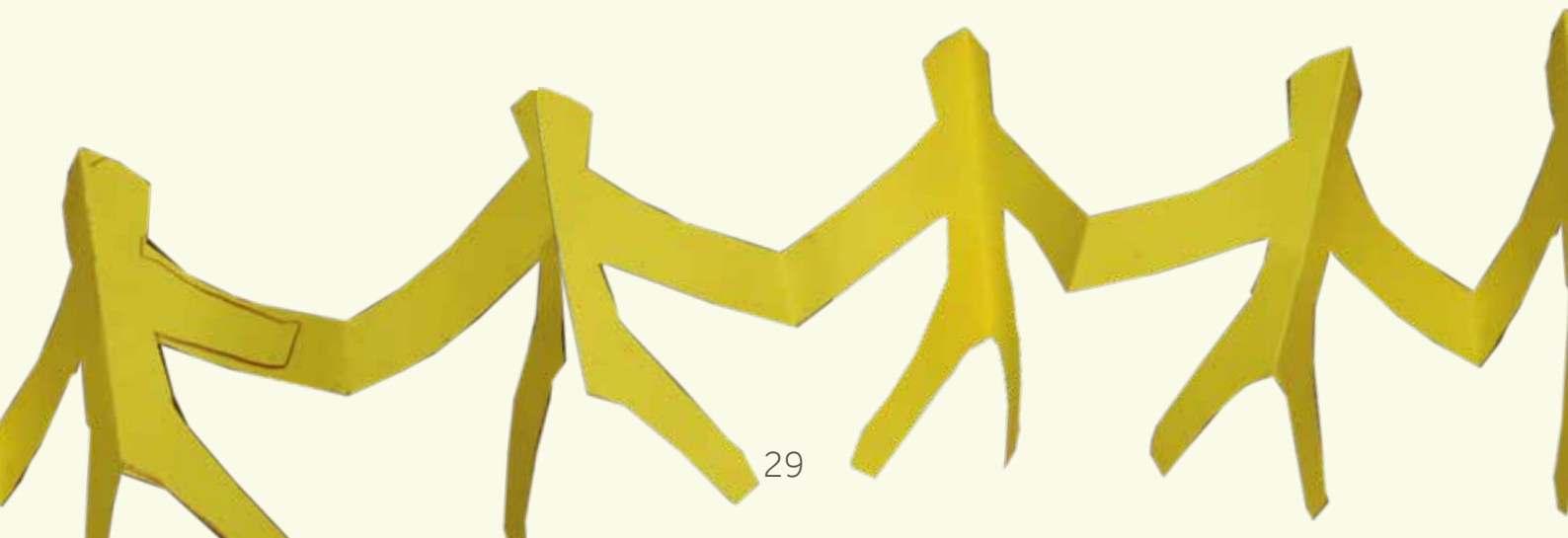
Edel Doherty

Edel is a native of Sligo and returned in 2014, after a period living in Leeds and Cork. Edel has been involved in many projects and collectives over the years, wearing many different hats along the way, and with a particular focus on film and photography. In her current role as Arts in Education Portal Manager, she manages all aspects of the Arts in Education Portal website, including content, project features and related digital marketing, and manages the coordination of all Portal events, particularly the annual National Arts in Education Portal Day and Spring Regional Day.

Looking ahead to 2023

As we plan for 2023, we look forward to continuing to extend our work with different communities of children and continuing to give children's voices and creative work a platform through publishing and the arts. We look forward to beginning new projects that will enable us to achieve these aims, with project partners such as Dungarvan Traveller Community Health Project and EPIC (Empowering People in Care).

We will continue to work with all age groups of children and young people, from 0-18, and to always extending our understanding of voice, how we listen and respond. We look forward to continuing to support artists in the professionalisation of their practice with children, and to another year of championing the value of artists working collaboratively with children.



Testimonials

"When I first discovered *Charlie Barley* and *Clotty Malotty*, I was delighted to see that Kids' Own had captured an insight into the community which I believed to be genuine and true. I remembered some of the rhymes and connected with others as they brought me back to my childhood. I delighted in the fact that I was remembering words and phrases that were unique to my community... The text and imagery are both wonderful and it is clear to see that the books are the result of a meaningful collaboration between all involved. I believe that through the very pure and innocent perspective of a child's voice, the books will allow for the stimulation of dialogue around the many aspects and traditions of Traveller culture."

– Leanne McDonagh, Artist.



Testimonials

"It is hard to believe that it is almost 20 years since the first publication of Clotty Malotty and All Her Friends... I am still in touch with some of the Traveller girls who took part in the project and who speak fondly of their memories of collecting the rhymes and jingles, creating the artwork, producing the book, and participating in the launch in the local Finglas library... To all involved in the republishing of Clotty Malotty and All her Friends, I send my best wishes and hope that this type of publication continues into the future so we can all be supportive and encouraging to the collecting and retelling of stories and rhymes from the past generations so that these voices will be appreciated into the future."

Winnie McDonagh, former project worker with TESO/Barnardos, and project partner on development of Clotty Malotty in 2003.

"The artist, Naomi, considered early childhood learning and development, and although impacted by the pandemic, put arts and creativity at the centre of the project, using mediums suitable for children at a more advanced stage. The project furthermore encouraged parents to play with their children."

Maeve Whittington, Coordinator, Sligo Leitrim Children and Young People's Services Committee

"The children who attended were such a joy to be around. Even though the activities planned were the same, every workshop was completely different based on individual needs"

Alex MacNaughton, Artist on Hearts and Minds Project

"I knew very well that there was no specific Traveller culture reading material or appropriate resources for young Traveller children in the early stages of reading. I asked the Traveller children in my class for more rhymes and gradually a small collection of rhymes and jokes emerged. My hopes of getting this collection published became a reality when I met the Kids' Own team in the Model, Sligo in 2001. Workshops to create the artwork for Charlie Barley commenced in three schools that autumn, with artist

Orla Kenny (RIP). Charlie Barley and All His Friends was launched at the Model on the 13th December 2001, to a huge crowd of proud parents, Traveller and settled, to celebrate Traveller culture. It was a highlight in my life."

Mary Branley, Kids' Own Associate Writer.

"Sligo County Childcare Committee were delighted to be involved with the A-Z programme and the results highlighted by the parent and child's voice has demonstrated the importance of that parent/carer interaction. We hope the project can provide valuable learning for both parents and educators into the future."

Sharon Boles, Manager, Sligo County Childcare Committee

"Expressing yourself is important. As soon as I could express myself, an opportunity came my way. Expressing myself taught me that we're all different in form we are all equal in value"

AR, participant in Love is Love book.

"The finished product, their book, is a beautiful piece of work and while some of the stories they have to tell are critical of the services they have been involved with, that makes it all the more valid and important and it will be a resource for us in Tusla to help us think about how better to work with children and young people."

Dr Liam White, Area Manager, Sligo, Leitrim and West Cavan

Testimonials

“We met, we talked, we made things and threw them in the river, well everything except plastic. We drew our hands and other pictures. We made floats, and boats and rafts and watched them float and get stuck, turn over in the rapids and fall apart.

Some of our creations made it under the bridge and were carried out to sea. We walked in the woods too, and soem of us hid in trees and caves and a little hut. We talked about our lives in foster care, and how we coped with the hard times. We shared our hopes and dreams for the future”.

– Participant in workshops for *My Own Jungle*



Testimonials

"Children are traditionally understood as targets of arts programmes and interventions and much more rarely as co-creators and I think the value of Kids' Own's work from a children's rights perspective is their implementation of children's right to be heard. They do that by putting children's creative voice at the forefront of the publications."

Dr Amy Hanna, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow.

It's been a real delight to see their work throughout the years, beautiful publications that have been made and the gorgeous processes that have led to the creation of those books. They've taken the time to create these processes between artists and children. I've known Kids' Own since Orla Kenny was the director and the incredible love and joy that she brought to the work and that was across it all is still here, and you can still feel that. And that's an incredible thing for an organisation to be able to carry that work on."

Seóna Ní Bhriain, Head of Young People, Children and Education, Arts Council of Ireland.

"We had eight weeks to make the book, step by step. We did the recordings and some of us did some writing. We started making the boxes. The boxes are about us and the parts of our lives we wanted to tell stories about. They show our past lives in Syria, our families and friends. I like art and I like the way we created the boxes, and it gave us the feeling of being creative and we don't want it to end".

Participant in Kind Hearts book.

"The work Kids' Own does is so valuable and so unusual."

Dr Bryonie Reid, Quarto Collective.

"The work they do is just so beneficial to young people in the community in order to get their voices heard and be able to express themselves in a creative process, because unfortunately sometimes young people aren't listened to. Kids' Own really manage to get their voice across."

Kate McGoldrick, Sligo Leitrim Home Youth Liaison Service.

"Our hope for the future is that our book will explain the war and how we came to Ireland. Some people feel that Syrian people are not good people, but the book will show you that they are".

Participant in Kind Hearts book

"I tell my friends about my foster family. I think some people don't understand about foster care, but it's easy to explain. It's when you are taken away from your parents if they were fighting or something, and they weren't able to look after you. So, you go and live with a new family."

Participant, My Own Jungle.

"I want to make my box about my house that broke in Syria."

Participant in Kind Hearts book.

"I am who I am and, as long as my close circle of friends know who I am and what I represent, then that's fine by me'.

– Participant at LGBTI+ creative workshop, Love is Love

Financial Summary

Total income:	€405,979
Total expenditure:	€401,842
Total assets:	€34,811