

## Little John's House News—Autumn 2018.

Registered charity No: 1156332



Another amazing Summer School is fading into the distance. It is always such a privilege meeting new volunteers, who come with such eagerness to give their all to the children for a week or so. They give us a renewed energy to do our best for the children and their reflections can re-awaken our passion for what we do. It's easy to get caught up in the idea that what we do is ordinary, but the experiences that our volunteers provide for the children that we invite are far from ordinary—they can be life-changing.



This wee girl had been found by authorities on a rubbish heap, before being admitted to one of the orphanages who are invited to bring their children to Summer School. Her smiles kept our hearts warm as she eagerly explored all that was on offer for her.

Saddy, Nicu was out of action for a couple of weeks at the beginning of the Summer School, which meant that some of our volunteers had to step up to driving the bus and collecting the children in the mornings. We do offer our thanks for being so willing to get involved in all aspects of making sure the Summer School runs smoothly.



Thankfully, Nicu made a full and speedy recovery and normal service was soon resumed!

Another important aspect of our Summer is that of catching up with the families of our residents to see how they are doing and keep the contact going. We haven't been to see Costica's mum for some time but we needed to go this year to sort some paperwork. Unfortunately, we had no way of phoning ahead to announce our visit and Costica's aunt (who Mum lives with, as she isn't capable of independent living) wasn't home, but we had a brief visit with Mum at the gateway. She wasn't too sure about letting us in and we can't be sure if she knew who Costica was, but they both stood proudly for a photo.



Probably the most useful purchase of the summer was definitely this lovely car. Not only is it a vital means of transport for Magi and others when they visit, but it also means that quick journeys into town can be done without using the minibus. A great asset all round.

One of the nicest pleasures of this summer was by far being able to give this young man a home for a while. Sandel—Laur's youngest brother is now home alone, as all his sisters have been married off—the youngest, aged just 12. To start with, we were a little concerned that he may have been overwhelmed by the experience, but we needn't have worried, as he got stuck into everything as if it had been a part of his life for ever!



It was such a delight to see the joy he received from simple pleasures, and he was a real credit to his family, polite, well-mannered and very hard-working. His older brother was a complete credit to us, as he looked after him in every way. Needless to say, when we took him home, he went fully equipped to start the new school year with a whole new wardrobe!



Those of you who follow us on Facebook will know that at the beginning of September, we had to appear in court with this young lady to determine her future with us. Saddy, further financial gain for families who take their children out of institutions was the driving force behind Mum filing a case to take Anamaria back home. When the date came, Anamaria had a lovely day out, but Mum did not turn up. The recommendations of all the professionals were that she stays with us, but the court were unwilling to make any firm decisions at this time.

The current situation is that Anamaria is welcome to stay on with us, but if Mum turned up to take her away—and Anamaria agreed—we would have to let her go with Mum.

It is not an ideal situation and our lovely psychologist, Eri, is working with a lawyer to try and get the legal status of our residents more permanent, but in the meantime, we continue to do what we can to keep her safe.

It is always lovely to read other people's comments about the work of Little John's House, so to finish off this update, here is a lovely summary of the summer.

*"I can't quite put into words the effect that my time at LJH had on me. Once I stepped into the grounds, it was clear that this is a very special place. I was introduced to the residents of LJH who immediately gave me the warmest welcome you could imagine - there is no hesitancy from them - just an acceptance that you are there to provide warmth, love and support."*

*"It really didn't matter at all that there was no running water in the barn! I spent a week there and the basic nature of the facilities added to its charm."*

*"The group got on so well - we came together with the single purpose of providing some very vulnerable children with a positive experience. The summer school programme is full of fun, games, singing and lots of dancing. The experience takes you away from the 'ordinary' and provides a space within which you can be yourself, where things that worry you at home can be easily forgotten. It came away from LJH a changed person - it was only a week but it has left an incredible impression on me. I left a little bit of my heart at LJH and can't wait to get there next summer."*

As always, our huge thanks to you all for your continued support.  
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