

Project Summary Report



**explore
and
wonder**



Project Summary

Shared Island Cruinniú na nÓg Project 2026



Cruinniú na nÓg is a day of free creativity for children and young people. Ireland is the first, and only, country in the world to have a national day of free creativity for children and young people under 18.

Cruinniú na nÓg is a flagship initiative of the Creative Ireland Programme's Creative Youth Plan to enable the creative potential of children and young people.

Explore and Wonder was a Shared Island Cruinniú na nÓg project designed to engage children and young people with additional needs in creative activities that encouraged curiosity, creativity, and connection.

Delivered in partnership with Creative Cavan and Creative Monaghan the project built on the original "Explore & Wonder" proposal delivered by Creative Cavan in 2025 to expand reach within Counties Cavan, Monaghan and Fermanagh.



Project Aims



The project aimed to:

- Promote creative participation for children and young people with additional needs
- Support inclusive access to high-quality creative experiences
- Align with the values of Cruinniú na nÓg and the Shared Island initiative



Our Delivery



Marketing and social media

The marketing and social media campaign for Explore and Wonder was developed in line with Creative Ireland's values, placing creativity, accessibility and inclusion at its core. A targeted, audience led approach was supported by a bespoke visual identity. This used commissioned illustrations alongside clear, plain English messaging and graphic design to ensure that children and young people with additional needs and their families felt informed, reassured and confident to participate.

A phased campaign across social media and print included social-story style posts, facilitator introductions and practical information on supports such as quiet spaces, parking and accessibility, alongside illustrated information brochures, onsite signage, visual schedules and pre-event social stories to support understanding and reduce anxiety.



Hello! My name is Thomas.

I will be making music at Sensory SongTales. There will be music and song, with touch, light, smells and movement inspired by nature.



Inclusive communication tools such as Lámh and Makaton were promoted throughout, ensuring engagement for non-verbal participants. This integrated approach not only increased awareness of the event but built trust with families, supporting inclusive participation and demonstrating a commitment to embedding universal design and creativity in public engagement.

Parking and facilities

Parking is right beside the entrance to the arena. There is a coffee shop and a Changing Places Facility at the Leisure Centre on site.



I can learn fun circus skills such as diabolo, juggling and stilt walking.

Project Delivery



Events

A strong emphasis was placed on inclusive participation for the events. Activities were designed to be accessible and welcoming with efforts made to reach marginalised and underrepresented groups. Delivery methods supported different needs and abilities.



Mathias was happy. He loved the Disco Wave (us too)! It's lovely find spaces that are inclusive and for all the family.

Venue - Share Discovery Village

Originally established in 1981 to give people with disabilities the opportunity to enjoy holidays with their families and friends, Share has remained dedicated to creating a safe, welcoming, and fully accessible environment for all.

Situated in Northern Ireland Co Fermanagh borders both Counties Cavan and Monaghan and with a large arts arena Share provided an ideal location for this event.

Evaluation findings identified the venue as welcoming, inclusive, and fully accessible, with participants noting the supportive atmosphere, high-quality facilities, and the overall sense of comfort and ease that contributed positively to their experience.



“Myself, Miley and his granny couldn't get over the place. The facilities, the staff, the time, the space, the general feel of the place was top notch.”

Events



Saturday 6th June
2pm–5pm
Share Discovery Village
Co. Fermanagh

Key Activities Included:

- DiscoWave – A sensory-friendly disco for autistic and neurodivergent children and their families.
- Sensory SongTales – A gentle music session for children with complex needs and their families –
- Marvelous Marbling – Explore the colourful and sensory process of marbling.
- Mark Making Mural – A collaborative canvas where everyone is encouraged to contribute.
- Circus Skills – inclusive circus skills
- Creative Zone – free play area with facepainting sensory toys, lego station and a space to make your own mini ‘zine’ book.

Delivery was supported by experienced creative practitioners with extensive experience working in the disability field and operating in partnership with both local authorities and community stakeholders.



Attendance : 66 children with 49 parents/carers.

Project Delivery



Outreach

Venue: Holy Family, Cootehill, Co Cavan and Willowbridge, Enniskillen, Co Fermanagh – both special education schools

Key Activities Included:

- Sensory SongTales – A gentle music session for children with complex needs, delivered by Ceol Connected
- Each session has capacity for 6 children plus their families to help create a calm, comfortable and supportive environment.
- Children are welcome to engage in whatever way feels comfortable for them, listening, moving, vocalising, exploring sensory materials or simply relaxing in the space.



Attendance: 54 children plus approx. 36 adults

Project Outcomes



Evaluation

A robust reporting and evaluation of the project engaged with participants, parents and facilitators.



It was a relaxed, colourful and friendly atmosphere. No rushing, no expectations.

Miley was free to make to make his own decisions



Our Outcomes



Participant Evaluation

Graphic harvesting captured key moments and produced visual outputs that supported both engagement and reporting.

This captured children's voices in a visual and accessible way, and provided an immediate and meaningful form of evaluation, documenting thoughts and reactions as they emerged during the workshops. It was particularly valuable for children who did not use words, ensuring their contributions were still seen and recognised.

This process strongly aligned with our child-centred approach, reinforcing the "voice of the child" by ensuring that as many children as possible were heard, represented, and meaningfully included.



Our Outcomes

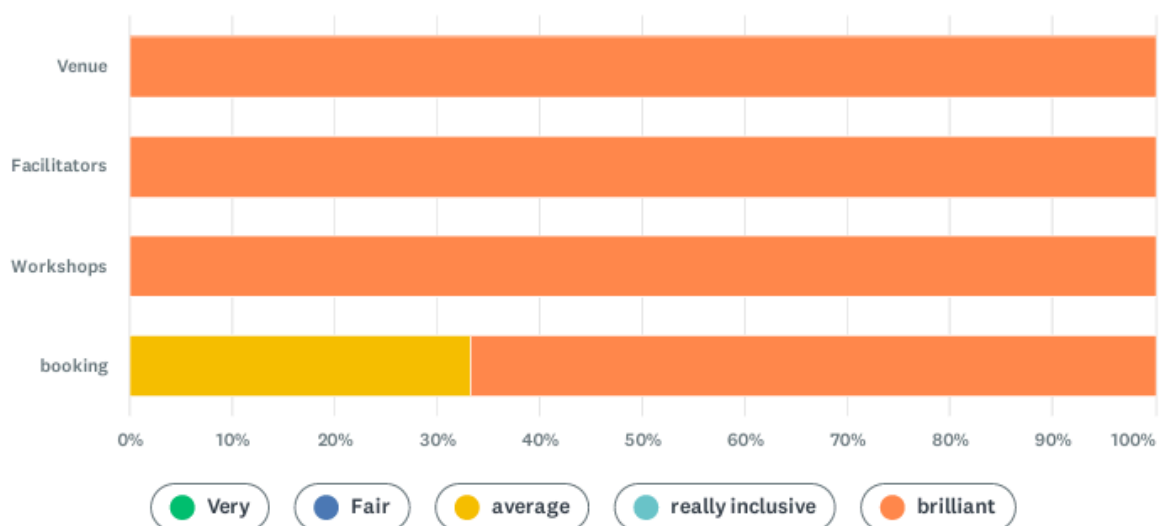


Parent Evaluation

The most popular activities participated in were 'Disco Participation', 'Physical Skill Play', and 'Artistic Creation Activities'.

Sentiment analysis shows overwhelmingly positive feedback, with 100% positive responses for activities and event feedback. The event was rated as 'brilliant' for inclusivity across venue, facilitators, and workshops, with a slightly lower but still high rating for booking. All respondents rated their child's comfort and sensory support at the highest level (5 stars). - The overall event rating was 'Excellent' from all participants. - Respondents were from Co Cavan, Co Monaghan, and Co Fermanagh. - People found out about the event through social media, word of mouth, and other means. Full results in Appendix 1

Was the event welcoming and inclusive?



Our Outcomes



Facilitator Evaluation

The event was rated very positively overall, with 80% of respondents selecting 'Excellent' and the remaining 20% choosing 'Very good'.

Facilitators felt highly comfortable in the space, with all respondents giving the highest comfort rating (5 stars). Most facilitators also believed participants were comfortable, with a weighted average comfort score of 4.8 out of 5. The event was seen as welcoming and inclusive across venue, workshops, and booking, with high scores and positive feedback. Sensory needs were well supported, reflected by a high satisfaction score (weighted average 4.8/5).

Open-ended feedback was overwhelmingly positive, highlighting family-oriented programming, accessibility, and community engagement as key themes.



Community events of this nature are much needed as families of children with disabilities can often struggle to find suitable activities for their children to engage with outside of school. The feeling of isolation, inability to find suitable provision or access to meaningful opportunities for creative or social engagement with other families was really evident from some of the conversations I had with parents over the course of the event.

Project Summary

The Explore & Wonder project delivered meaningful outcomes for participants and partners:

For **Children and Young People:**

Increased confidence and creative expression

Opportunities to explore new environments and ideas

Positive shared experiences with peers across counties

Inclusive access to creative activities

For **Communities:**

Strengthened cross-border connections

Enhanced visibility of Cruinniú na nÓg in Northern Ireland

Increased engagement with Cruinniú na nÓg activities

Opportunity for parents/carers to connect with other families

For **Partners:**

Strengthened collaboration between Cavan, Monaghan and Fermanagh.

Shared learning across local authority teams

Foundation for future joint programming





Our Acknowledgements

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We would like to acknowledge:

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Share Discovery Village

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Design: Saoi Studio

Illustration: Lydia Hughes

Jago Studios Videography

Sheila Marie Rooney Photography

Ruth Graham, Graphic Harvester

All participating children, young people, carers and families



Questions? Contact us.



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Explore and Wonder is delivered in collaboration
with Creative Cavan and Creative Monaghan



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Clár Éire Ildánach
Creative Ireland
Programme

RTÉ



Comhairle Contae an Chabháin
Cavan County Council



Shared Island
Initiative