

Dyslexia Association of Ireland

Suffolk Chambers

1 Suffolk Street

Dublin 2

Tel. 01 6790276

Website: www.dyslexia.ie



annual report + accounts 2006

Introduction

The Dyslexia Association of Ireland is a company limited by guarantee, which has charity status. It aims to promote the study of and improve the understanding of dyslexia.

The association has provided essential services for people with dyslexia since 1973.

These include:

- * Information – telephone help line, information booklet and website.
- * Psycho-educational assessment for children and adults.
- * Group or individual tuition for children.
- * Individual tuition for adults.
- * Summer schools for children.
- * A full-time course for adults, run in conjunction with FAS.
- * In-service courses for qualified teachers.
- * Short information courses for parents.
- * Seminars and Conferences.
- * Speakers for Teachers' and Parents Groups.

The association has 34 affiliated branches around the country, each serving the needs of its own community. Branches organize group tuition for children in their own areas and act as parent support and awareness-raising groups.

The DAI is a founder member of the European Dyslexia Association. It is a supporting corporate member of the British Dyslexia Association, a member of the Disability Federation of Ireland, the National Adult Literacy Agency, and Spectrum (an umbrella group for associations dealing with hidden learning difficulties). DAI maintains close links with FAS, the Association for Higher Education Access and Disability (AHEAD), and other relevant bodies.

The Dyslexia Association represents more than 3,000 families and schools. Membership is open to any interested person. Associate membership is available to schools and other organisations.

Anne Hughes
Director

Dyslexia Association of Ireland
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President's Report to Annual General Meeting 21.4.2007.

The past year has been one of mixed fortunes for people with dyslexia and for the Dyslexia Association. There has been some good news, for example, the ruling by the Equality Authority that it was discriminatory to endorse the certificates of students with dyslexia who received special accommodation in state exams. On the other hand, a campaign on which we spent a great deal of time and effort, the tax campaign, failed to yield the results we hoped. Still the work goes on. We continue to work for the welfare of all people with dyslexia and their families and, as always, we have a busy year ahead.

Campaign for Tax Relief

For a number of years now, parents have been able to claim tax relief on fees paid at DAI workshops by filing the Med 1 Form. This mechanism allows costs incurred for medical expenses, psycho-educational assessment and speech and language therapy to be claimed as tax deductible expenses. While fees paid to workshops were never formally included on this list, these expenses had been allowed in the past. In 2006, a ruling from the Revenue authorities stated: "expenses in respect of such tuition do not qualify for health expenses tax relief and have never qualified for the relief since it was first introduced in 1967."

This ruling was a bad blow to many families. Paying workshop fees puts a strain on the budgets of many parents, and while we try to make provision for families on low incomes through fundraising, middle income parents have to pay full fees. Members of the association felt it was unfair that a distinction was being made between spoken language therapy and written language therapy. The cost of speech and language therapy is an allowable expense, but the cost of dyslexia therapy, or tuition, is not. In July a request was made to the Minister for Finance, Mr. Brian Cowen for a meeting. The full facts were presented to him in a written submission and he was asked to amend the tax legislation. Letters outlining the situation were sent to all T.D.s, many of whom were very supportive and contacted the Minister on our behalf.

Unfortunately Mr. Cowen was unable to meet us, but in a letter dated November 10, he informed us that

he has no plans to make tuition fees for dyslexia tax deductible. His position is that direct expenditure, i.e. money spent by the Department of Education and Science, is the best way of helping all children with dyslexia. Mr. Cowen also pointed out "it is projected that some €823 million of the 2007 Estimates allocation for the Department of Education and Science will be related to disability and special needs."

This is a very disappointing response. The Dyslexia Association receives only €63,500 annually from the budget of €823 million for special needs. The portion of this grant available to fund students in workshops amounted to €6.01 per child in 2006. Parents pay workshop fees from their taxed income. Teachers pay tax on money they earn from workshop teaching. VAT is paid on all equipment used in the workshops. The Exchequer benefits from this, but yet refuses to allow a tax refund. There is no need to remind members that parents only send children to DAI workshops when they know that the necessary help is not otherwise available.

There is inconsistency in the stance of the Minister. The cost of speech and language therapy is an allowable expense, the cost of psycho-educational assessment is allowable, but not the cost of the tuition which is often recommended by the assessing psychologist. The argument that direct expenditure is the best route could also be applied to the practice of giving tax allowances for medical expenses, or for pension contributions. These services are also provided by the state. Tax relief can be obtained on fees paid to private third level institutions. Grants were made available last year by the Department of Education and Science to facilitate students attending Irish colleges. A three week summer school for children with dyslexia last July had to be cancelled because parents could not afford the fees.

It would seem the perception is that dyslexia is being catered for within the school system and that attendance at workshops or summer schools is unnecessary. It is up to each and every member to ensure that the educational authorities are informed that this is most certainly not the case.

President's Report to Annual General Meeting 21.4.2007.

Hasbro Game Playing Week

Now for some good news. In 2006 the DAI was again the beneficiary of the Hasbro Game Playing Week. It was a great honour to be chosen for the second time. The timing was just right, as the funds acquired in 2004 had been exhausted. Game Playing Day took place on October 27th when schoolchildren brought €2 and their favourite game to school. All funds raised came directly to the DAI to be used to subsidise the tuition fees of children from financially disadvantaged families.

More than €80,000 was raised. This represents a lot of hard work by a great many people. Thanks are due to over 676 primary school and 28 secondary schools who took part. Schools are overwhelmed with fund raising demands and requests to organise events, so we are most grateful to those teachers who took on our cause.

Special thanks are due to the event sponsors the Hasbro Company, which made a generous contribution of €5,000. Anne Dermody of Hasbro Ireland is the driving force behind this scheme and we owe her a huge debt of gratitude for the energy and commitment which she has shown on this project. Anne was ably assisted by Caroline Heywood and Gillian Martin of Walsh PR. Together they ensured that there was widespread media coverage of the event and of dyslexia. This publicity is invaluable for the association and helps raise awareness in a very positive way. Some lovely photographs of Kathryn McKiernan from The Den on RTE2 who attended the formal launch appeared in local and national papers.

To date over €38,000 has been paid out to DAI workshops to cover or subsidise fees for 124 children from all parts of the country. The really good news is that there will be some funds available for the coming year also. Many, many thanks to all involved, not least to Rosie Bissett, on whose shoulders the considerable burden of administration falls, and to the volunteers who phoned schools to enlist their help.

Endorsement of Examination Certificates

A landmark ruling by the Equality Tribunal that placing an endorsement, or asterisk, on the certificate of a student who had received special

accommodation in state exams was discriminatory was welcomed within the association. Two students whose certificates had been so endorsed were deemed to have been discriminated against and it was ruled that new, unmarked, certificates should be issued to them. This was a vindication of the stand of the DAI, which has campaigned against such endorsement for many years. However, the Department of Education has appealed this ruling to the Circuit Court and so it may be a year or more before the case is heard. In the meantime it is not anticipated that changes will be made to the practice of annotating such certificates.

In-Service Courses for Teachers

In-service courses for teachers were held in Cork, Mullingar, Dublin and Arklow. Some 200 teachers attended and feedback from participants indicates that such courses are very much needed and appreciated. In-service days in schools were also provided as well as a large number of information talks to teachers at primary and second level.

Adult Services

Funding was received again in 2006 for our adult services from the Further Education Section of the Department of Education and Science. A grant of €93,000 was allocated for support of individual adults and towards the running costs of the Career Paths Course. This very valuable support allowed the DAI to carry out eighteen fully funded and two partially funded assessments for adults. It also helped to pay most of the costs associated with running the Career Paths course. This course is invaluable as a resource for adults who need intensive literacy tuition and has proved its worth many times over in getting participants back into work or into further training.

It was disappointing therefore that hopes for offering a shorter version of this course to adults who are not in a position to avail of the full-time course, such as those in low paid employment, or occupied in home duties, came to nothing. A detailed submission was made to the Dept. of Justice, Equality and Law Reform under the Enhancing Disability programme, but surprisingly it was deemed that the project was not innovative, despite the fact that no similar programme exists for adults with dyslexia.

President's Report to Annual General Meeting 21.4.2007.

It is hoped that the Further Education Section may increase its funding for 2007 to enable the association to offer a more flexible programme. The Further Education Section has been very generous and consistent in its support in the past, and it is hoped it may respond positively in this instance.

The DAI provides input to Disability Awareness and Training for employees of FAS and other concerns. This is an area which has developed significantly over recent years but in which there is still a great need.

Vodafone Funding/Parents' Courses & Booklet

A grant of €14,000 has been allocated to the association by Vodafone Ireland. This money will allow us to offer courses for parents at reduced rates at five different locations in the current year and also allow the production and publication of a booklet for parents.

Branch Developments

The effort and commitment needed to maintain a branch of the association and keep a workshop running is considerable. As work, commuting and time pressures increase many committees find it difficult to get the necessary support from members and so branches close down. In 2006 both Mullingar and Cavan ceased operations. Perhaps in the future they may be revived.

A new and vibrant group has formed in south-west Donegal, called the Erneside branch. This group of parents and teachers hope to have a workshop in operation by the autumn.

Fundraising and Membership

A number of fundraising events were held in 2006. As well as raising money these served to increase awareness of dyslexia and allowed members a chance to get together and enjoy some different activities. In March we had the Gordon Banks Dinner on the occasion of the launch of a book by Don Mullan on the famous goalie of the 1965 World Cup. Don very kindly gave us 200 copies of his book free of charge and this continued to raise money during the year.

The mini-marathon was not a big source of funds in 2006 for a number of reasons but a new event was

launched. A Fun Walk in Glendalough took place on September 30th and this will now be an annual happening. It's a healthy, happy, family-friendly event and one that has potential to become a Dyslexia Association institution.

Membership fees continue to be our greatest source of income and without the support of our members we could not survive. Thanks are due to those many members who maintain their subscriptions even though their children are long since grown, and to those generous members who add an extra voluntary contribution to their membership.

Membership subscription has been €30 since 2002, and so the time has come to ask for just a little more from our members. From January 2008 membership will be €40.00 per year. The cost of keeping in touch with members through Newsletters is increasing hugely. Postal charges, costs of printing and stationery have escalated over recent years. Membership is necessary for all families with children attending DAI workshops or who attend tutors from the DAI list, but it is important to remember also that membership subscriptions enable us to provide information and support to people from all round the country. The DAI is the main resource for people in search of information and advice.

6th European Conference

"Dyslexia – Challenge and Achievement" The Helix, D.C.U. - October 20th 2007

This conference has a wide ranging brief and should be of interest to parents, teachers, adults with dyslexia, employers and trade unions. It will feature talks on parent support, second and third-level options, and there will be a major focus on the effects of dyslexia on people in the workplace. Dyslexia is a life long condition and is as real at 45 as at 15, though the issues are different.

Conferences are held every three years so this is an opportunity not to be missed. Full programme and registration form is available on the DAI website (www.dyslexia.ie).

President's Report to Annual General Meeting 21.4.2007.

Finances and Grants Received

Audited accounts are presented separately but I want to acknowledge here the grants which we received in 2006. We rely very heavily on these grants to maintain the services we provide to the general public and to our members. The sum of €63,500 for our information services, funded assessments and subsidy of workshop fees was received from the Department of Education and Science. This helps to defray some of the cost of running our office, maintaining a telephone helpline and providing written information. Our helpline is constantly in use and indeed the difficulty in getting through is a source of frustration to many callers.

A grant of €93,000 for our Adult Services was received from the Further Education Section of the DES. This grant enables us to play our role as sponsors of the only full-time course for adults with dyslexia in the country. We are deeply indebted to FAS which administers the course and provides the bulk of the funding.

The support provided by our Education Officer and Branch Liaison Officer to branches and other community and school groups is funded by a grant of €41,000 from the Dept. of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. This latter grant is coming to the end of its life, having been allocated for three years only.

Acknowledgements

In closing I want to thank: the members of the national executive committee who have been so supportive over the past year; particularly the steering and fund-raising sub-committees. Many thanks to Noel Muldowney who prepares our accounts for audit and keeps a watchful eye on us. Many, many thanks to those dedicated people who make up the voluntary committees of the branches. We all know how difficult it is for busy people to give up time for this work. Heartfelt thanks to the Programme Co-ordinators, Assistant Co-ordinators, teachers and tutors in our workshops. Without their expertise and commitment our children would not get the help they need and deserve. Sincere thanks to the staff of the national office – our psychologists Mary Ball, Martina Colleran and Crid Rawlings, Administrator, Rosie Bissett, Branch Liaison Officer, Deirdre McGuinness, and our Director, Anne Hughes. Finally, but very importantly, thanks to you the members of the association. This association is about you and your children, about the teachers who care about them and about the adults who still encounter their dyslexia every day. It was the hope of the people who set up this organisation that it would one day be redundant, that adequate services would be in place for all people with dyslexia. Sadly that dream is still a long way from realisation, which is why we must go on working and providing the services which we know are still needed.

Mary Byrne, National President

Directors and other information 2006

National Executive Committee:

National President: Mary Byrne
Vice President: Madge Daly
Hon. Secretary: Caroline Dooley Martyn
Hon. Treasurer: Eadaoin Briody

Committee Members:

Matthew (Gerry) Byrne, Mary Cosgrave, Olive Connolly, Alison Doyle, Jo Gannon, Maureen Kelly, Paddy Lockhart, June Maher, Pauline Moran, Wyn McCormack, Antoinette O'Reilly, Treasa Ni Seoighe

Staff

Director: Anne Hughes
Psychologists: Mary Ball, Martina Colleran, Crid Rawlings
Administrator: Rosie Bissett
Branch Liaison Officer: Deirdre McGuinness

Company Information

Company Secretary: Anne Hughes
Registered Office: 1 Suffolk Street, Dublin 2.
Registered No. 185795
Bankers: Allied Irish Bank, 9 Terenure Rd. East, Rathgar, Dublin 6.
Auditors: JPA Brenson Lawlor & Co. Argyle Square, Morehampton Rd., D4.
Solicitors: James Connolly & Co. 13 St. Andrew Street, D2.

Report of the Director of Education to Annual General Meeting 21.4.2007.

Since the last AGM In May, 2006, DAI has continued to deliver the following educational services:

- workshop tuition
- information sessions with staffs in schools
- talks for parents of children in workshops
- in-service for workshop staff
- DAI courses on dyslexia for teachers
- workshops

Workshops throughout the country continue to offer an invaluable out-of-school tuition to a great number of children and we acknowledge the dedicated work of all concerned. Deirdre McGuinness has visited many of these over the year. I accompanied her to Newbridge, Glenties, Letterkenny, Cavan, Wexford and Monaghan.

Staff In-service

DAI continues to receive requests for in-service to teachers. Deirdre McGuinness has visited a number of schools in the past year to talk to the staffs. During February I was invited to talk to one staff, in Drumcondra. In February and March I spent six days in the Cork area, visiting, in total, some fifteen secondary staffs, to deliver introductory information sessions on dyslexia and appropriate teaching strategies in the general subject classroom. The project had been envisioned by Mary Beechinor-Byrne and her colleagues in the Cork Branch and at the time of offering a speaker to the schools they had no idea how large the project would become. Since then I have been in contact with SESS and it is expected that they will take up from where we left off, to develop awareness and good practice at second level. More recently Deirdre McGuinness and I were invited by the Principal of Derinturn N.S., near Edenderry, to give an afternoon session to the staff. We acknowledge the hospitality and warm reception we have received on these occasions.

In January we ran an in-service day in Suffolk Street for tutors from the Northside workshop. A number of speakers gave up their Saturday morning to deliver this and from all accounts the morning was judged to be beneficial.

Talks for Parents

We also continue to receive requests to deliver talks for parents in various parts of the country. In addition to the visits made by Deirdre, I spoke to groups in Balbriggan in November and in Cork in February.

Liaising with other groups

Two initiatives during the year stand out as being of particular note: working with NCBI and AHEAD to get the digital books project off the ground and attending a Department of Education seminar on disability, in Marlborough Street in the autumn. The latter gave an overview of the various agencies and courses that are on offer. The former is now under way and a small sample of volunteers is using the DAISY equipment to study their Leaving Certificate Geography text.

Following the Cork DAI Teachers' Course we were approached by the Director of SESS and at a subsequent meeting, held in Suffolk Street it was agreed that we would work alongside them to support their service. They recognize our course as the first stage in training teachers to deliver in-service to schools all over the country. We have been encouraging course participants to apply to SESS to work with them at some level.

Teachers' Course

Our biggest project this year was getting together the outline of and then the delivery of the DAI Teachers' Course, subsequent to Alan Sayles accepting his new post in the Department of Education and Science and consequently not being able to deliver the course any longer. We now have a team of eight, experts in a number of areas, who have been responsible for the successful delivery of five courses, in Mullingar, Cork, Dublin and Waterford, since early July last. We go to Donegal town this July, from 2nd to 6th.

Mary Ball

Director of Education

Report of the Auditors to the members of Dyslexia Association of Ireland

This report is made solely to the company's members, as a body, in accordance with Section 193 of the Companies Act 1990. Our audit work has been undertaken so we might state to the company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the company and the company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

We have audited the financial statements of Dyslexia Association of Ireland for the year ended 31 December 2006 which comprises of the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Cashflow Statement and the related notes. These financial statements have been prepared under the accounting policies set out therein and the requirements of the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities.

Respective responsibilities of committee members and auditors. As described on Page 2 the Association's committee members are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and the accounting standards issued by the Accounting Standards Board and promulgated by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland (Generally Accepted Accounting Practice in Ireland).

Our responsibility is to audit the financial statements in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland).

We report to you our opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view in accordance with Generally Accepted Practice in Ireland applicable to Smaller Entities, and are properly prepared in accordance with the Companies Act, 1963 to 2006. We also report to you our opinion: proper books of account have been kept by the company and whether the information given in the directors' report is consistent with the financial statements. In addition, we state whether we have obtained all the information and explanations necessary for the purpose of our audit, and whether the financial statements are in agreement with the books of account.

We report to shareholders if, in our opinion, any information specified by law regarding the directors' remuneration and transactions is not given and where practicable, include such information in our report.

We read the directors' report and consider the implications for our report if we become aware of any apparent misstatements with it.

Basis of audit opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Auditing Standards issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made by the directors in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the company's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or other irregularity or error. In forming our opinion we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statement.

Going concern:

In forming our opinion, we have considered the adequacy of the disclosures made in note 1 of the financial statements concerning the uncertainty as to the continuation of the charity's government grant income in the future. In view of the significance of this uncertainty we consider that it should be drawn to your attention but our opinion is not qualified in this respect.

Opinion

In our opinion the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of the Association's affairs in accordance with the Generally Accepted Accounting Practice in Ireland applicable to Smaller Entities, of the state of the organisation's affairs as at 31 December 2006 and of its surplus for the year then ended; and have been properly prepared in accordance with the Companies Acts 1963 – 2006.

We have obtained all the information and explanations that we considered necessary for the purpose of our audit. In our opinion proper books of account have been kept by the Association. The financial statements are in agreement with the books of account. In our opinion the information given in the Report of the Directors on page 2 and 3 is consistent with the financial statements.

JPA BRENSON LAWLOR

Chartered Accountants, Registered Auditors,
Argyle Square, Morehampton Road,
Donnybrook, Dublin 4.

Date: 26th July 2007

Dyslexia Association of Ireland (limited by guarantee not having a share capital)
BALANCE SHEET as at 31 December 2006

	2006 Euro	2005 Euro
FIXED ASSETS		
Tangible Assets	<u>12,126</u>	<u>9,604</u>
Current Assets		
Stocks	4,110	9,430
Prepayments	77,228	4,990
Cash at Bank and in Hand	<u>377,638</u>	<u>388,254</u>
	458,976	402,674
Creditors (amounts falling due within one year)	<u>82,128</u>	<u>47,250</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS	<u>376,848</u>	<u>355,424</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES	<u>388,976</u>	<u>365,028</u>
Financed by		
Reserves		
	2006 Euro	2005 Euro
Income & Expenditure Surplus	<u>388,976</u>	<u>365,028</u>

On behalf of the Board

Madge Daly – Director

Mary Byrne – Director

Date: 26th July 2007

Dyslexia Association of Ireland (limited by guarantee not having a share capital)
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT for year ended 31 Dec. 2006

	2006 Euro	2005 Euro
Total Income	729,464	492,526
	-----	-----
Administration Expenses	699,612	477,929
Financial Expenses	1,533	625
Depreciation	4,371	2,604
	-----	-----
	705,516	481,158
	-----	-----
Surplus on ordinary activities before taxation	23,948	11,368
Tax on ordinary activities	-----	-----
Surplus on ordinary activities after taxation	23,948	11,368
Surplus retained at beginning of year	365,028	353,660
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Surplus retained at end of year	388,976	365,028
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The Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet have been prepared on the going concern basis.

There are no recognised gains or losses other than those passing through the Income and Expenditure account.

On behalf of the Board

Madge Daly – Director

Mary Byrne – Director

Date: 26th July 2007

Dyslexia Association of Ireland (limited by guarantee not having a share capital)

DETAILED INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT for year ended 31 Dec. 2006

	2006 Euro	2005 Euro
Schedule 1:		
TOTAL INCOME		
Fundraising & Donations	51,974	24,121
Rental Income	16,550	7,330
Seminars & Courses	251,674	127,999
Psychologists Fees	46,360	51,736
Deposit Interest	6,3664	621
Membership Fees	86,544	82,219
Hasbro Schools Project	72,496	
Dept. of Education and Science	156,500	153,500
Dept. of Community, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs	<u>41,000</u>	<u>41,000</u>
	<u>729,464</u>	<u>492,526</u>
Schedule 2		
ADMINISTRATION EXPENSES		
Wages	385,370	353,892
Grants paid to Branches	66,871	(33,278)
Rent, Light & Heat	24,000	24,000
Audit & Accountancy	1,800	1,557
Insurance	6,309	4,152
Repairs & Maintenance	1,380	
Printing, Postage & Stationery	37,499	21,532
Telephone	4,217	3,794
Fundraising Expenses	16,947	1,331
Educational Materials	6,006	7,329
Teachers Courses & Seminars	128,222	82,693
Sundry Expenses	8,580	3,771
Travelling Expenses	<u>12,411</u>	<u>7,156</u>
	<u>699,612</u>	<u>477,929</u>
Schedule 3:		
FINANCIAL EXPENSES		
Bank Interest & Charges	<u>1,533</u>	<u>625</u>
	<u>1,533</u>	<u>625</u>
Schedule 4:		
DEPRECIATION		
Office Equipment	<u>4,371</u>	<u>2,604</u>
	<u>4,371</u>	<u>2,604</u>

Branch Liaison Officer's Report to Annual General Meeting 21.4.2007.

This year has been very successful for some of the Branches with an increase in student numbers requiring tuition. Some of the workshops have significant waiting lists; this we feel is due in part to the withdrawal of Resource and Learning Support from many students with dyslexia. There are many branches experiencing difficulties in getting trained teachers to tutor in the Workshops, despite the fact that all our teachers' courses have been over subscribed.

Many of the Branch Committees have again expressed concern over lack of parental support in attendance at organised talks and fundraising activities. The continuation of the branches is crucial to the operation of the Workshops and without parent support these essential local services will cease to exist. Some families still use the services of the association without paying their annual membership. We rely on this to fund the Information Service and other national services. A reminder is sent out each year before the renewal date. Upon renewal, all members are issued with a new membership card.

Again this year we were fortunate that DAI was the chosen charity by Hasbro for National Game Playing Week. This was great news for us and we raised just over 80,000 Euro. It involved a huge amount of time and energy in contacting and following up on all primary and secondary schools to encourage their participation in the event. As branches know, this money has been used to support financially disadvantaged families in our workshops. There is no guarantee we will get funding like this again, so it is as important as ever that parents become active in local fundraising to support their branches.

This is an important year in the electoral calendar, as highlighted in our Newsletter. Please be ready and well prepared to engage the prospective candidates on your doorstep or other public places to discuss your personal crusade in helping your child to reach his/her full potential. Mention the fact that the extra tuition your child requires either privately or in the Workshop is not tax deductible.

This year has been very busy spreading information on dyslexia. Anne Hughes and I have spoken at public meetings in Ballyshannon, Inishowen Peninsula and Roscommon. Mary Ball and I have spoken in Newbridge, Carbury, Co. Kildare and Trim. I have been to Carlow, Jobstown and Leixlip. We have been invited to Listowel and to Kenmare in Co. Kerry. These talks have generated much interest and have led to the setting up of new Branches. The following workshops were visited: Monaghan, Cavan, Wexford, Celbridge, Balbriggan, Galway, Wicklow, Athlone, Sligo, Newbridge, Rush, Kilcock and Letterkenny.

In conclusion on behalf of DAI may I take this opportunity to thank all the hard working committees for their dedicated work throughout the country. Finally, a sincere special thank you to the committed teachers who tutor in the Workshops, many of whom have already taught for a full day in their own schools before coming to give such necessary specialised help to children with dyslexia.

Deirdre McGuinness
Branch Liaison Officer