



Lisa Gallagher, 'The Fun Party' Childrens puppet show. Photo: Donna McBride

A new puppet show extravaganza

CHILDREN'S birthday parties will never be the same thanks to a Donegal woman who will entertain your kids with a new one-person puppet extravaganza.

Lisa Gallagher from Kilmacrenan has just completed her training with the brand new Kids Party Club franchise, offering puppet shows for parties, schools and even weddings.

Originally from London, Lisa has now been living in Donegal for eight years with her three children Molly (9), James (4) and Conor (3).

"I trained and worked as a nanny in London for about eight years back and now I run a parent and toddler group on a Friday morning with two other people."

Having a lot of experience in working with children and having completed parenting courses Lisa wanted to get back into working more.

She said: "I looked up www.franchisedirect.co.uk and came across the 'Kids Party Club' franchise and just gave them a call.

"I went down to their head office in Shannon and the more they told me about their business, the more I loved the idea of joining them."

Lisa subsequently went down again to undergo and intensive two-day training course in Shannon.

"I had to learn magic tricks, the skills of puppetry, how to run a show, scripts and the marketing side of run-



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ning the business," said Lisa.

"The training was quite hard," she laughed, "I'm sure I'll need big muscles to hold up the puppets for the length of the show."

"I didn't realise before how physical this job would be and you have to make sure that your puppets are moving and speaking at the right time, there's an awful lot involved in getting your timing right."

"Kids Party Club' has a whole range of different characters and stories, Lisa said. "The characters are all lovely, and we have everything from a wizard to the bad boy Boris," she laughed.

"In a children's story there always has to be a bad guy that the kids can 'boo' and the good guy to cheer on, and of course there's the important

happy endings."

Lisa and her brand new company will be able to cater for a whole range of different events, from kids' parties to weddings.

She said: "We have the ideal way to keep your children entertained at a wedding, during the meal and the speeches I take the kids into a separate room and put on the wedding show for them."

"This show tells the story of Brendan and Mavis who get married and have a baby and after that we have a little disco."

"So while the speeches are on, for example, your children are being entertained and it keeps them quiet and happy."

The franchise also provides great shows for schools in which Lisa will be able to tell stories that bring an important message across.

Lisa said: "The stories for the school shows are about topics such as bullying and healthy eating and are very educational."

"The stories are about forty minutes long and through the puppets and the story we can deliver a message to the school children."

Entertainment that involves a lot of audience interaction will be provided at your child's birthday party with exiting stories such as 'Silly Billy Monkey Boy'.

Lisa said: "Silly Billy Monkey Boy is all about Billy who hates going to

bed and decides to go for a walk one night when he should be asleep."

"Needless to say, things take a turn for the worse when he meets Boris the evil magician. In fact he turns Billy into a monkey."

"But never fear, help is at hand in the shape of kindly old lady called Alicia and the good magician, Bjorn The Beautiful."

"In the end good triumphs over evil and everyone is happy, except maybe Boris. All the way through there are lot's of opportunities for the children to interact with the characters. Oh no there's not. Oh yes there is."

"All the shows are pre-recorded which is brilliant and I don't have to do any voices at all and mind you I wouldn't be able to do an Irish accent," she laughed.

The performance is about 25 minutes long and the children are entertained with a fun-filled disco afterwards.

"When we do parties, children get stickers and other little gifts and the birthday child will also get a nice gift."

There is no better way to do a trial run of this show than performing in front of a live audience, and Lisa did exactly that and put on a show for the children of the Educate Together School in Letterkenny.

"The kids absolutely loved it and I could barely hear myself, the noise

was so loud," she laughed, "They really think the puppets are alive and wonder where they go after the show."

"This was a great opportunity for me to see how everything would go from the set-up and lighting to the actual performance and I was delighted with how it went."

Although the shows are aimed at four to eight-year-olds the show can appeal to younger and older children, Lisa said

"I have a three and nine-year-old and they absolutely love the puppets as well and I have to hide them when I am at home," she laughed.

There's nothing like the 'Kids Party Club' in the whole county so no doubt Lisa will be very busy in the near future.

"I'm hoping to cover the whole of Donegal on a full-time basis. I want to get out to as many people as possible," said Lisa.

"It's brand new concept, which only started last June, and the company is adding new things and coming up with new ideas all the time."

Lisa said: "I know myself as a parent that trying to think of something good for a kids birthday can be tough so I'm sure that the 'Kids Party Club' will do really well."

To book Lisa Gallagher's 'Kids Party Club' contact her on Mobile 086 604 4840 or via email on lisa@kidsparty-club.ie