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Onwards & Upwards

Kieron Bruce O'Brien Executive Director



Having recently taken up my new post at East Park from Common Thread where I was their Executive Head of Learning Provision, it is both an honour and privilege to work together with everyone involved in this excellent organisation. Having worked in forensics, pastoral, care and educational environments over the last 35 years in South Africa and Scotland I am well aware of both the challenges and opportunities that East Park faces now and in the future.

It is vital that we continue to work closely with parents, local authorities, Scottish government and other key organisations as we grapple with the fast changing landscape within Care and Education in Scotland.

East Park is a unique organisation and I would like to recognise the wonderful work that our incredible staff carry out on a daily basis. In this stimulating environment, we all seek the best

for each child and young person. Our families too need to be acknowledged as we work together, finding the best methods and routines that work for every child.

I believe that East Park is a place to come and learn, be supported and seek better ways of doing things.

East Park is at the cutting edge of our sector and has the opportunity to become a leader in the provision of bespoke packages for our individual young people and the training of our staff. By adopting a value-based service mindset that extends from the organisation into the home and community of every child, young person, parent and staff member we gain a sense that we

value and support each other and this provides the basis for our interactions and interventions. I guess we learn most from our own children. My 12 year-old son returned from a football match recently saying, "It is great to be part of a winning team." When asked to elaborate he said, "While we do not win every match, when we lose we still feel part of a winning team because we look for lessons that we can learn from the experience, rather than blaming anyone."

I believe that East Park is a place to come and learn, be supported and seek better ways of doing things. It encourages us to continue engaging with each other and explore the opportunities that give our children, staff, parents and stakeholders an environment that they can embrace and engage with safely, securely and in the knowledge that their best interests are always first.

EAST PARK IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYER REGULATED BY THE CARE INSPECTORATE AND EDUCATION SCOTLAND

eastpark.org.uk

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LOTTERY FUNDED



HAPPY HOLIDAYS



Marcus' smile says it all!

For a week in October of 2017 during the school holidays, groups of residents from East Park were given the opportunity to stay in a cottage a stone's throw from the Bonny Banks of Loch Lomond. For some of the young people this was their first ever holiday and thanks to the dedication of their support staff and the generosity of St. Nicholas' Care Fund who donated funds to pay for the holiday, it was without doubt a trip to remember. On arriving at the wonderful Stuckdarroch House, a renovated B listed cottage surrounded by streams, a waterfall and a beautiful walled garden, the young people claimed their rooms and unpacked before taking the time to explore



Krishna loved the Bonny Banks!

what would be their home and base of operations for the next few days. It didn't take long for them to discover the open-air hot tub in the garden, not to mention the 65-inch TV and Xbox in the lounge. Once they were over the shock of the massive TV the young people chose what they'd like to do that night; some chose to play in the hot tub (rain, what rain?) while others went out for a meal. An itinerary of activities were planned for the holiday including a trip to the Sea Life Centre at Loch Lomond shores where the young people enjoyed watching the otters get fed and jumped at the chance to hold a starfish. Whilst other activities included walks around Balloch Castle Country Park, pedalo boating and a ferry trip on Loch Lomond in force 7 gales! Despite a busy schedule and unfamiliar surroundings, the young people (and staff!) settled well in to Stuckdarroch House and really cherished the opportunity to experience new things. Suitably exhausted by the end of the week, the young people thoroughly enjoyed their holiday to Loch Lomond and still talk about it to this day.

Marvellous Morrisons



Thank You Morrisons!

At the end of last year, a group of young people from Workmates were lucky enough to be invited to the supermarket, Morrisons, in Partick, where they were given the chance to be involved in taster sessions, have a go on the checkouts and were able to explore the different areas of the store. The staff at Morrisons greeted the young people with a lovely warm welcome to the store and they were shown to their first station - fruits from around the world. Here, the young people were told about each fruit, where it comes from and had the option to try some if they liked. The group then moved on to the pizza area - a favourite amongst the young people as they had the opportunity to make their own pizza to take

home with them. The next stations were the delicatessen, the fish area and finally the one with a lovely smell - the bakery! This is where the young people got to sample some of the home baked cakes and all things sweet. As it was just before Halloween, the bakers had been baking Halloween themed cakes, which they very kindly gave to the young people. The students continued with their tour around the store and Laura, one of the young people, was able to try out one of the checkout tills and scan through items. As the group left the store, the young people were given beautiful Halloween Hampers filled with goodies. A massive thank you to Linda and all the staff at Morrisons for a lovely afternoon and for their very thoughtful gifts!

Enjoying The Outdoors



Learning to cook on an open fire

Each Wednesday afternoon pupils from classes across the school work together at the Children's Wood. Last term pupils were learning outdoors about fire safety, how to build and extinguish a fire, and how to cook on an open fire. Pupils have enjoyed toasting

marshmallows and baking bread from delicious dough donated to us by 'The Bakery - by Zique'. Pupils have been safely using tools to whittle sticks to cook with. Everyone has really enjoyed these exciting opportunities and has managed brilliantly while learning new skills.



Enjoying the fruits of their labour!

SHINING STARS

Karen McInnes Teacher



Domanic gets into character

At Christmas, I was lucky enough to be involved in our Nativity, and I want to share some of the excitement and Festive spirit we experienced. We decided to move away from our traditional Christmas show this year, and try for an inclusive Nativity and what an experience it was! For the month of December, we couldn't move in school for costumes, props and scripts. All of the young people were allocated roles and supported to prepare their lines. They were involved with selecting costumes and making props (the King's crowns and Shepherd's sheep were personal favourites!) We spent a lot of time acclimatising the students to the hall and the set-up we planned to use. All of our wonderful staff team were so supportive with this and really used their imagination to ensure the young people were able to attend and relax.

Getting to work with every young person in the school was rewarding and engaging, and the interactions we had were so memorable.

Getting to work with every young person in the school was rewarding and engaging, and the interactions we had were so memorable. On the day of the show, the hall was full to bursting with all of our East Park family. It was an honour to host so many wonderful people, and we felt so supported and loved as we set off on our journey to the Gold Star Inn. Our audience were encouraged to join in with our singing and signing, and we were accompanied by our fabulous music specialist, Bryan! The show went without a hitch and every single student gained new experiences and confidence from being involved. A huge thank you to everyone who helped, created and supported a truly fabulous event and finally, a gold star to Workmates for lending us a doll for our manger at the eleventh hour!

Shout Out To Nadia!



Nadia danced the night away!

Residential pupil, Nadia, thoroughly enjoyed a trip to see Little Mix at the SSE Hydro. She listens to music regularly and is a fan of the band, often reciting their songs on a regular basis. Music has a positive impact on Nadia's emotional development. Being therapeutic, it helps her relax and reduces her anxieties. It also encourages her to come out of her shell and show off her singing and dancing skills! When keyworkers found out Little Mix were due to perform in Glasgow it was a perfect opportunity for Nadia to attend. In November, Nadia, supported by keyworkers Lisa and Emma, attended the concert. Prior to Nadia's visit, East Park contacted the Hydro to arrange specific requirements and to carry out a risk assessment, which made Nadia's visit safe and suitable for her needs. As expected, the Hydro was busy with crowds, had many bright lights and was noisy, which can be over stimulating for many of our children and young people. Being mindful of this Lisa and Emma gave Nadia continuous reassurance, and step-by-step instructions of what was happening throughout her journey.

On arrival, a very excited Nadia met security who she handed her tickets to and was shown to her seat. The lights went down and Little Mix appeared on stage, greeted by roars from the crowd and Nadia shouting "Hello" and clapping. She enjoyed singing and dancing the night away!

Nadia said she enjoyed seeing "the flame" and "lights change" on the stage. Lisa and Emma were aware that Nadia may have been unable to manage the duration of the concert and were really impressed that Nadia stayed until the very end!



Nadia loves her Little Mix t-shirt!

To remember her evening Nadia purchased a Little Mix t-shirt and took LOTS of photographs! When leaving the Hydro Nadia said that she had a really good time. Since the concert, a memory book has been created containing photos of Nadia's evening at Little Mix, which she can cherish and look back on. We are incredibly proud of Nadia and the achievement she made that evening, of not only being able to cope with new experiences and sensory inputs, but by interacting, singing along, and most importantly we are thrilled that she thoroughly enjoyed the experience. We look forward to being able to continue to support Nadia in exploring her interests and promoting her choice and independence. Well done, Nadia – we are so proud!



Fundraising & Volunteers

A Big Thank You!



Santander volunteered in November!

At end of 2017 we were lucky enough to have corporate and community volunteers come in to East Park to help maintain and freshen up some areas around our community houses.

A huge thank you to the following teams for making our homes a brighter place! Thank you Bearsden Academy, Royal Bank of Scotland, Santander and Tesco Bank!

CHILDREN'S AID SCOTLAND



A massive thank you to Children's Aid Scotland for the support that you have recently given us! Children's Aid very generously donated a brand new mini bus allowing

children to be able to attend more activities and vital opportunities to extend their learning and development. And also, Children's Aid Scotland were kind enough to donate 10 iPads to help fulfil our young people's 24-hour curriculum, enhance communication and a whole lot of fun and games! Once again, a heartfelt thanks to all at Children's Aid Scotland, your support is very much appreciated!

SMART DONORS!



Mya using the SMART Board

Thank you so much to the Trades House of Glasgow Commonweal Fund, SPIFOX Too, The Merchants House of Glasgow and The ACT Foundation for their recent donations, which have allowed us to purchase new SMART Panels for our classrooms. A SMART Panel is an interactive white board which combines the simplicity of a white board with the power of a computer,

Could You Walk For East Park's Children?



What a feeling!

The Kiltwalk is a well-established event which people can choose to walk a certain distance for a Scottish Charity of their choice

with 140% of the money you raise going to your chosen charity. The walking distances are as follows:-

- 26 miles from Hampden Park to Loch Lomond
- 13 miles from Clydebank to Loch Lomond
- 6 miles around the shores of Loch Lomond

If you think you, a group of friends or some colleagues could take part in the fun-filled activity we would love to see you!

Please sign up at www.thekiltwalk.co.uk

Santa Comes Early!



A massive thank you to all at British Legion Bikers Branch for a fantastic morning at the beginning of December. The group of motor bikers braced the freezing conditions, dressed up and decorated their bikes in a Christmas theme to deliver presents to the children, young people and siblings of East Park. Everyone was in great festive spirit and the young people enjoyed sitting on all of the different bikes and getting a warm drink and biscuit with the bikers afterwards.

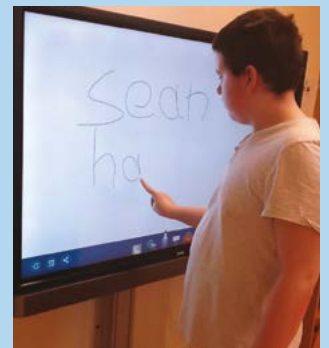
Thank you so much to the bikers and every single corporate,

community group and individual who donated Christmas gifts to our young people – you helped make their Christmas one to remember!



Gabriel gets a ride on a motorbike!

enabling teaching staff to deliver dynamic lessons that are particularly suited to our children. It can give a voice to those with who are limited in their ability to make their needs and ideas understood. These new panels will play an integral part in helping us support our young people to achieve their personal communication and learning outcomes.



Sean writing his name