



East Park

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# eastparkpatter

Your newsletter for East Park



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## Welcome to eastparkpatter



### Ken McChlery, Chair

WHEN his best friend's son was born with severe disabilities, Ken McChlery felt as if he had been dealt a blow. As the father of a healthy baby daughter himself, he struggled to understand how anyone could possibly cope with a very sick baby and a grim prognosis. So he made a decision to volunteer with an organisation where he could find out more and also do his bit to help support children and families.

"I opened the Yellow Pages in search of somewhere to turn and the first place I came across was East Park." says Ken, who is a civil servant.

That was 30 years ago and today Ken is Chair of East Park, working with Trustees from fields such as education, accountancy and the law profession to

steer the organisation as it continues to develop new ways to support and stimulate the children it cares for. Over his long association with the organisation, he has seen East Park develop into a centre of excellence for autism and transform the way in which it provides education and residential care. Ken explains, "East Park works with each child on an individual basis. The staff are dedicated to getting the best out of everyone, no matter how long it takes or how much hard work is involved. And the end result is that the children flourish."

There have been many successful fundraising campaigns to improve the fabric and facilities at East Park, but none so important

as this in its 140th year to raise around £2.5 million to extend the classrooms and residences so that those children who need space to develop before they start to integrate with other children get a chance to do so in their own time. Yet despite the challenge, Ken is confident that the positive attitude of the staff, parents, supporters and children at East Park will enable the organisation to reach its target.

Today Ken's daughter is grown up and his friend's son has defied all early predictions to lead a happy and productive life. Still Ken's association with East Park continues. He says: "It is such a happy and uplifting place that just being in East Park feels like a real privilege."

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

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LOTTERY FUNDED





## Eco Schools

The representatives on our Student Council have been taking the lead in promoting an ECO ethos in the school and wider organisation. We have been working hard over the past two terms to get our application for our first Green Flag award ready, and we are pleased to say that it has now been sent off and we await word of when an assessor

will visit us to see all this work in action. The Green Flag is an internationally-recognised symbol of excellence in sustainable development education, and a high accolade for a school to achieve.

Amongst other things, our ECO achievements recently have included regular recycling programmes in classes, a series of assemblies where we

explored how we can reduce waste, litter picking by the young people in workmates, and an ECO competition between classes, including Workmates – the winner was Class 1, well done!

One of our representatives went along to a board meeting at the end of last term and gave a report on all of our hard work. It is great to see our Student Council taking such an active and meaningful role in the life of East Park.



*Blair gathers bottle tops to recycle*

## iPad Fever continues...



*Bramble works on the iPad*

In the first edition of East Park Patter, we told you about our new iPad project, funded by Children's Aid Scotland along with fundraising by Turcan Connell, Resdiary and East Park staff who all ran the Great Scottish run in October. This project is going from strength to strength. Our work continues with the research team DART (Development, Autism, Research, Technology)

from the University of Edinburgh, with whom we are doing an exciting research project, studying the effectiveness of using this popular technology with our young people.

As well as a large number of iPads, we have bought specialised apps that help young people to further develop their skills in specific areas such as communication,

literacy and language, visual and auditory processing, and fine motor skills, as well as supporting their learning more generally. The apps range from a daily schedule planner, which can help to clearly structure a day or a lesson, a book writing app which can be fully personalised, two cause and effect apps which use motivating sounds and movements to engage, and two educational games that, amongst other things, develop basic iPad skills such as swiping and tapping.

The iPads are being used enthusiastically by many young people and staff alike. The immediacy and personal nature of this technology is proving to be highly engaging with our learners. As you can see, a sensory preference for sitting on the floor does not prevent Bramble from engaging in her work! The hard work by our young people has been

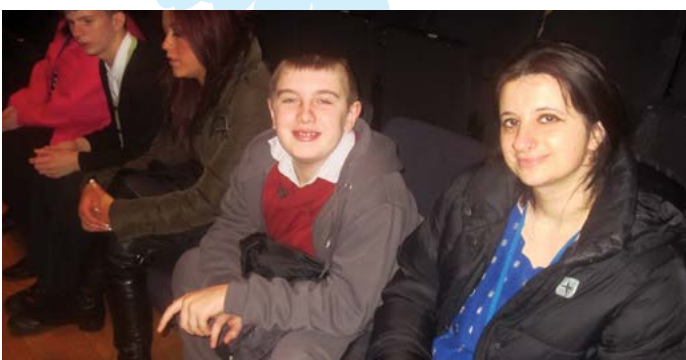
recorded and we are excited to share our experiences with the research team and beyond.

Recently Dr Alasdair Allan MSP, Minister for Learning, Science and Scotland's Languages, took time from his busy schedule to meet with staff and young people at East Park. The Minister was captivated by the work of East Park and expressed a particular interest into our research on the use of iPads as an aid to communication development.



*The Minister meets Sammy*

## Getting in touch with our heritage!



*Celtic Connections night out!*

As part of class 4 Scottish Studies Topic, we organised for East Park School to attend Celtic Connection Schools Burns Concert, at The Royal Concert Hall. Twenty four in all attended, which was a great response and everyone seemed to enjoy the performances.

The performers included Williamwood High School, piper and choir and Anna Massie and Mike Vass on

guitar and fiddle. The Celine Donoghue band finished with traditional Glasgow songs, "Donald Where's Your Trousers" and "The Jeelie Piece Song." The young people had a fantastic time! They were very focused and sat contented throughout the event. The atmosphere was electric and the singing continued on the way home. We all hope to attend again next year!

# Lessons in the Outdoors

Pupils from East Park have been benefitting from a lovely local facility – The Children’s Wood at North Kelvin Meadow.

Outdoor learning is a key element of the Scottish Curriculum for Excellence and our children and young people have benefitted from all sorts of events such as Forest School Sessions involving digging, den building and storytelling; Lantern making Classes; a Reindeer Parade and an Easter Egg Hunt and Story.

Eight East Park staff have attended training in the wood and came back with lots of good ideas for work with the children. One of our teachers has also been volunteering at the wood, and plans to undertake training in the near future which will qualify her as a Forest School Leader. The Children’s Wood has provided

East Park pupils with many new experiences and opportunities, and some classes use it regularly. It is apparent that pupils’ enjoyment

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in this natural environment enhances learning and provides positive experiences and outcomes which they would not otherwise have.

East Park plans to continue and support this work, thereby helping to preserve this valuable area of open space that is easily accessible for our young people.



*Graham learning about the wood with Joni*

## New bike from old clothes!



*Graham takes a spin on the new bike!*

Recently the young people wished to raise funds towards a new bike.

Through the support of staff and friends of East Park, the young people

successfully organised a fundraiser, to collect old clothes, which were recycled for cash, allowing a new bike to be purchased.

## Responsible Citizens!



*Ann McKechin MP with class 4*

Class 4/6 are undertaking Personal Achievement Awards, one being “Having Your Say” which also links to this term’s curriculum topic of Scottish Studies and The Referendum. As part of this we invited our local MP for Maryhill, Ann McKechin, to visit the school. On her visit, Ann informed the pupils all about her job. She explained the voting procedure, as the pupils will be eligible to vote for the first time in the forthcoming referendum

on 18th September 2014. The pupils were able to ask questions about her job and learned about how tax payers’ money is distributed locally and nationally.

They then had a mock election where the pupils learned how to cast their secret vote, how to post it in the ballot box, to count out the votes for each party and finally to disclose the winner. The pupils had a great time and Ann really enjoyed her visit.



## Fundraising & Volunteers



### Generous Pupils make a Christmas Donation

Pupils from **The High School of Glasgow** raised £2,000 for East Park – the latest in a long list of donations from the

High School to East Park. We are really grateful and wish all the pupils and staff best wishes for 2014!

### East Park tops Bank of Scotland poll!

#### ✳ BANK OF SCOTLAND

East Park's Workmates Project has been awarded £3000 from the Bank of Scotland Community Fund. Out of 4 local projects, East Park came FIRST with the majority of votes. A massive THANK YOU to our hard-working staff, children and families and all our friends! It wouldn't have happened without your support!

Nicola McCann, Resource Manager at Workmates, commented "...it's great that so many people voted for us at Workmates and thanks to the young people who helped with the publicity and posters. We had great support from staff, parents and lots of other friends of East Park. It was great to be nominated but even better to come first!"



### SHELL EMPLOYEES BRUSH UP!

Thanks go to staff from **Shell** in Glasgow, who switched their suits and computers in the Finance Office for overalls and paintbrushes to help paint one of our community houses as part of a team-building exercise.



Shell employees in Glasgow have chosen East Park as their Charity of the Year 2014!!!! Look out in the June edition for an update!

# East Park Angels



On a wet and windy day in December, **Mercury Motor Cycle Club** roared through the streets of Maryhill to bring Santa to East Park. They stayed and entertained the children

as well as having a much-needed cup of tea and mince pie!

Thanks to Joseph Patrick, who organised the event, which also raised around £400 for East Park!

### Supermarket sweep

Thanks to **Waitrose** Byres Road staff and customers. As part of the Community Matters initiative for December 2013, East Park is due to receive £285.



### Football collections bring in the cash!

As the Partick Thistle FC Charity of the Year, East Park has carried out two collections at home games over the past couple of months. Thanks to the generosity of the Mighty Jags supporters, we have raised around £1,300. With another collection taking place on 27th March, we look forward to bringing in even more support from the footie fans!

#### IN THE NEXT EDITION...

- Hear more about East Park's 140th celebrations.
- Read about our exciting activities on the theme of The Commonwealth, including a flavour of the artwork produced by East Park pupils for the Athlete's Village.
- Find out how we did on the Kilt Walk! ...and many more interesting stories about the achievements of East Park's children and young people. Please contact us with your news and views for our next edition at **epnewsletter@hotmail.co.uk**