

A Journey into Play!

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Over the last few years, East Park has been on a journey into Play!

Play Pedagogy has been a key theme across the school for some time now, and after last year's first Inservice Day session, on the Neuroscience of Play, we agreed that further professional development opportunities should be created to ensure our staff are skilled and knowledgeable in play-based learning. We were thrilled to be part of Play Scotland's Play Pedagogy Award Pilot, and are delighted to have achieved the Play Pedagogy Gold Award.

Recognising, identifying, and extending play schemas help us to understand our learners better and ensure that rich learning experiences are promoted across the organisation. We invited acclaimed Early Years Froebelian consultant, Dr Stella Louis, to lead our first development session of the year to give us a sound knowledge base on which to build over the year ahead.

Stella spoke about sensory needs, the process of play – and the importance of play – and where schemas (biological patterns of play) fit into our understanding of

play and childhood development. Schemas are repeated patterns of play, influencing what children say, do and the marks they make. The schemas we explored were:



- Viewing things from a different angle
- Developing skills
- Stages of schemas and development
- Schemas are biological

Key messages

- Power of observation
- Importance of play
- Seeing the meaning in play
- 'Challenging' behaviour can have good intentions
- Play is how children make sense of the world
- Learning through struggling
- Working things out for themselves
- Expression through play
- Importance of having a shared language
- Working out ways to develop learning
- Understanding the child's perspective
- Not censoring play
- Importance of being comfortable in your own skin
- Slow down to avoid missing things

At the end of Stella's presentation, she left challenge questions for us to consider, which we have been using to structure Practice Reflection sessions throughout the year. Our second play development day was led by Jane McKenzie from Learning through Landscapes. We enjoyed a great 2-hour workshop on Loose Parts and Den-building. After a brief theoretical outline highlighting Simon Nicolson's Theory of Loose Parts and James Gibson's Affordance Theory, Jane invited staff to complete a SWOT analysis of loose parts play at East Park and then we got stuck into some practical work to

get us all thinking about how to use loose parts effectively. This session was part of our Local School Nature Grant award, which also included waterproofs, welly boots and a year's membership of Learning through Landscapes.

Staff found these development sessions really valuable and this development work has added depth and richness to our professional knowledge. We've been busy putting all this learning into action. Look out for our Play Photo of the Week on social media showcasing how our learners are benefitting from a play-based approach.

Committed to PLAY



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Loch Lomond Holiday



Last year East Park young people and staff were lucky enough to experience a spring holiday in the Loch Lomond area, funded by a generous donation by a generous supporter.

Stuckdarroch House was rented for 1 week. It was important to allow as many of our young people as possible to experience getting away for a break. For our young people, having a lengthy holiday away from their usual routines and familiar environment can be overwhelming therefore, we



divided breaks into either a 2 night or 1 nights break. This allowed us to support 10 young people to have this experience.

Aiden, Amanda, Conor, Cooper, Craig, Domanic, Emma, Fiona, Liam and Kyle all experienced the holiday home.

The facility offered a great outdoor, secure space that allowed our young people the freedom to move around safely in the country side, allowing them to experience new sensory activities. The most enjoyed activity by all young people was their free access to the hot tub Jacuzzi (Staff enjoyed this too!).

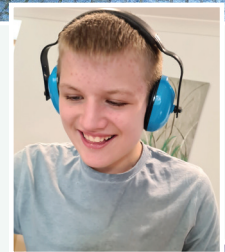
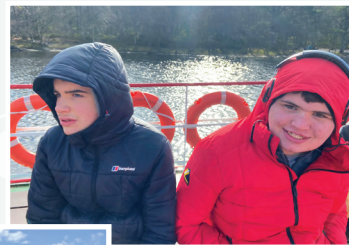
Loch Lomond was central to the activities throughout the week, young people enjoyed visiting the sea life centre, the wildlife centre, birds of prey experience, swimming, barbecues, picnics, speed boat trips, cruise boat trips, cycling and hill walking.

Everyone came back exhausted but full



of stories to tell and memories made for life.

Although the holiday experience is a small part of what we do at East Park, it is an important part. We are committed to our young people getting the best out of their lives whilst living with us and our commitment to The Promise that, through these experiences, when it is time to move on from East Park, everyone moves on knowing they are loved at East Park.



Best Day Ever

Workmates had a very special guest appearance from wrestler Ravey Davey! Paul, one of our young people is a HUGE fan of wrestling and was very excited about Ravey Davey coming to Workmates for the afternoon, this was a dream come true for him and "he had the best day ever". Ravey Davey was amazing with our young people

and showed off his wrestling moves with everyone watching on; Paul even got to try some of the moves on Ravey Davey himself! A massive thank you to Ravey Davey for coming along and being wonderful with all of the Workmates team. Since the visit, Paul has been able to keep in touch with Ravey Davey – Paul received a personalised

video message where he was asked lots of questions which as you can imagine has made Paul's whole year! Paul said "he would love Ravey Davey to come to Workmates every day and that Ravey Davey should open a wrestling ring in the school hall so that they can wrestle every day. My afternoon was AMAZING, the best day ever." Thank you so much to Ravey Davey for your time!



Have you seen our SPECIAL LOGO?



Have you seen our special logo? We have SUCH an exciting year ahead; from October 2023 – October 2024 we are celebrating a huge milestone – we are celebrating our 150th Year!

We have lots of exciting activities and events planned over the course of the year so keep your eyes peeled for more news on each event soon!

#EastParkis150

150th Anniversary Book

We Need



We are delighted to announce that we are writing our very own book! In conjunction with our 150th Anniversary, this book will showcase our 150 year history along with the social changes that have steered us to where we are as an organisation today.

We are looking for individuals to get involved in the book...

Are you or a family member an ex-resident/pupil of East Park or do you have a connection with East Park historically?

We are currently working on a range of projects in preparation for our upcoming 150th year celebrations and would LOVE to hear from you.

If you are happy to share some stories/experiences with us and are happy to have a chat with one of our researchers, please get in contact with Heather Welsh on 01419462050 or at heather.welsh@eastpark.org.uk

Keep your eyes peeled for more information on our book in the coming months!

#EastParkis150



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2024



Learning in the forest

We have been lucky enough to be able to send one of our teachers, Peter on a course to develop his skills and increase his knowledge on running his own sessions for pupils at the Children's Woods. The outdoors is a great place for developing learning; the course actively promotes the holistic development of all those involved, fostering resilient, confident, independent and creative learners. We have a great relationship with our local Children's Woods which is only a short walk away from our school, Sheila and staff at the Children's Woods are very welcoming to East Park's learners. We feel this is an ideal place for our Forest School lessons to take place because it is in a natural wooded environment which supports the development of a relationship between the learner and the natural world. Peter's training focuses on how Forest School uses a range of learner-centred processes to create a community for development and learning. Peter says "At the Monday woodland sessions I run, we have a variety of outdoor activities



for the young people and the forest itself is an ideal place for exploration and adventure. Near the end of the session we also have story time and singing. The story is read aloud, where another member of staff will bring the story alive by going around the group with story related props. With regards to the music, we concentrate on traditional Scottish songs. We bring along some small musical instruments which are handed out to the learners which they play along to the music." Peter is due to complete the course very soon and we are so

excited for him to be a qualified Forest School Leader. Peter feels that the course has opened his mind to what the outdoors can offer to East Park learners and also given him greater confidence in delivering forest school sessions.



Simply The Best Tour RANGERS FOOTBALL CLUB



East Park were delighted when Rangers Football Club rolled out the red white and blue carpet and treated many of our young people to experience the club with an access all areas VIP tour of the world famous Ibrox football stadium.

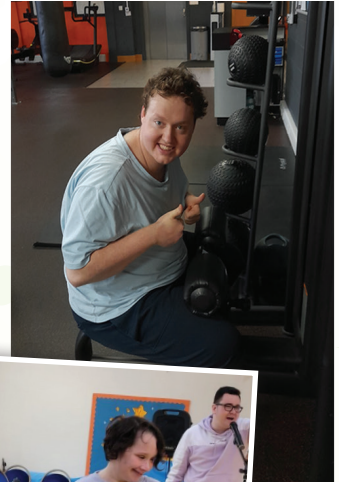
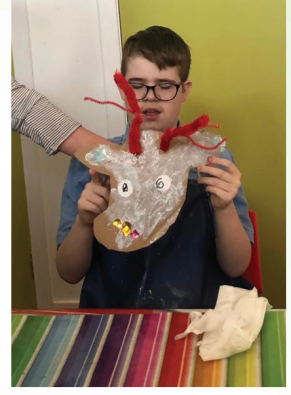
During the tour our young people received access to the home and away dressing rooms, got to climb the marble staircase and explore the Ibrox Club's Trophy Room.

On the day, our young people were excited to experience the unique atmosphere in the Blue Room and visit the old Managers Room as well as getting the chance to experience running down the tunnel before taking a seat in the dugout and getting an excellent view of the of the football pitch. East Park would like to

thank all at Ranger's Football Club and a big shout out to Norman, the Ibrox Stadium Historian for his expertise, sharing his knowledge and helping our young people not only experience the heritage and culture within Ibrox Stadium but providing our young people with a day to remember.



What we've been up to...



East Park's Very Own Messi

Pupil Nathan, has been really benefiting from football practice each week. The Rangers Charity Foundation kindly provide two amazing coaches, Jordan and Nicole as well as equipment and a pitch every Friday afternoon for our young people to visit. Staff and coaches who have been working with Nathan at football Fridays have noticed how much Nathan's football skills have developed since starting in August. Nathan is now dribbling with the ball, using two feet to kick and control the ball and his shooting skills have vastly improved. His teacher, Peter, said, 'I am a Partick Thistle fan and we could do with a goal scorer like Nathan because at the moment my team just can't score. It's just great to bring Nathan along to this training.'

He loves to be out and football is ideal for Nathan. It is developing his gross motor skills, turn taking, working with others and is also improving his fitness'.

Nathan's key worker, Dawn, took Nathan along to the football training recently and said, 'Nathan is not only getting better at football but he is also making new pals. Another school attend the session at the same time and Nathan has got friendly with another young person and the two of them have been passing the ball to each other. The coaches are delighted and have been a great encouragement to Nathan.'

Thank you so much to Jamie, Jordan, Nicole and all at the Rangers Charity Foundation for your support, it is very much appreciated.



A series of workshops and presentations about Autism practice at East Park

150th ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE

Led by East Park colleagues and our partners for parents and professionals



1874

CELEBRATING OUR PAST, OUR PRESENT AND OUR FUTURE

2024



Grosvenor Hotel
1-9 Grosvenor Terrace,
Glasgow G12 0TB

Friday 27th October
9am - 3pm £114

Tickets <http://bit.ly/3TD3auc>



Scan QR code for ticket details

Welcome to

the GLOW room

Thanks to an incredibly generous donation from Itison on behalf of visitors to GlasGlow 2021, we are delighted that we have been

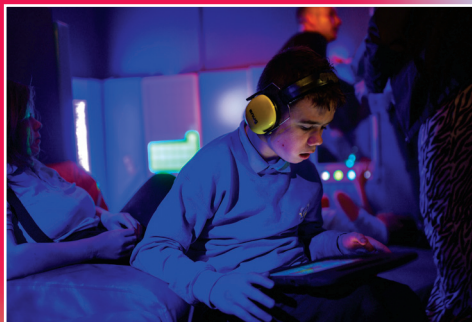
able to refurbish our much-loved multisensory space – now renamed The Glow Room! Rhino UK have brought our ideas to life

with a vibrant, flexible space and we are thrilled with the result.

This is what it looked like before the install began:



And this is what it looks like now:



We have a new, streamlined and more accessible layout with interactive boards, a bumper wall, and a resonance relaxer. Children and young people can explore cause and effect through a range of tactile controls that

link to a bubble wall, an infinity mirror and a sound-activated luminous panel. The updated colour scheme, chosen by pupils and Workmates, is more age appropriate and there is now space for interactive games and relaxation

activities too. It is vital that our children and young people have access to sensory experiences which help them to self-regulate, and this fantastic new space really reflects that need.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY Robertson House!

At the end of last year we had a special birthday in our care services. Our first residential house, Robertson House, was 21!. It has become affectionately known as Rob Ho.

Over the last 21 years it has been home to many young people all with various needs. Rhona has been the Team Leader since the beginning and has managed many staff.... some are still here!



they always show enthusiasm and care, evident in the homely environment. The house continues to be filled with fun and laughter and lots and lots of noise!

We hope we have created memories for all the young people who have moved on and we hope to create many more for our current young people.

Here's to the next 21 years!



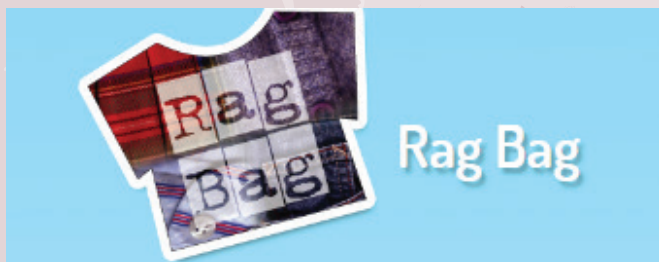
Although the actual building has not changed, the décor has. Each young person has their own style and therefore has their bedroom decorated to reflect this. Over the years we have had daleks, police boxes and dinosaurs! The

garden has been home to football nets, swing ball, a treehouse and many, many trampolines. We have also had countless barbeques and birthday celebrations!

We are so proud of the staff who work in the house,



ARE YOU HAVING A CLEAR OUT?



We are looking for donations for our Rag Bag Recycling Bank.

The 'Rag Bag' recycling scheme has been developed to provide regular fundraising for schools and nurseries in the UK.

The scheme increases awareness about textile recycling and by increasing recycling rates we can help

the environment by ensuring less material goes to landfill.

If you have any wearable clothing, paired shoes, handbags or belts that you are able to donate we would be delighted if you could drop them into our reception to help us raise funds for our children and young people.

Thank you so much for your help!

WHISTLE While We Work

One of our workmates students has recently started a work experience placement at the Grosvenor Hotel in the West End. The Grosvenor have provided an amazing opportunity for this young person and have really helped him learn new skills. He has been helping with laundry – stripping beds, gathering towels and taking items to the laundry room to be cleaned by the hotel services. The young person has gained a lot of confidence from this experience,



independent living skills and enhanced his own work routine without prompting when visiting the Grosvenor. Our staff member, Michelle who supports him at the work experience says "staff at the Grosvenor have been great with including and integrating him as part of the team and making him feel valued so we would like to send a big thank you to the team at the Grosvenor!"

Happy for us to keep in touch?

East Park would love to continue to share the achievements and learning of our children and young people by sending you our quarterly East Park Patter. However, if you would rather not receive this newsletter please complete this tear off slip and return to **Fundraising, East Park, 1092 Maryhill Road, Glasgow, G20 9TD.**

I would **not** like to receive the East Park Patter anymore

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