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J12 News

A project working with 10-18's in the east end of Glasgow

Merry Christmas

Happy New Year

Personnel changes

Earlier in the year Vicki Shaver came to the end of her term as Chair of the Board. Vicki has been involved with J12 since its beginning and has provided wisdom, advice and support to staff over the years. Phil Wray, who has also been involved with the project since its beginning, has succeeded Vicki as the new Chair of the Board.

There have been changes on the Management Group too. Firstly, Jo McNeish has moved from the Management Group to a seat on the Board and Joan Russell has stepped down from her position on the Management Group after 14 years. Joan has been part of the Management Group since the project's beginning and was responsible for finding the premises for the J12 Base. The Management Group was delighted to welcome Scott Leonard and Brogan Whitelock, who were both young people with the project. It is a huge encouragement to see young people stepping up into leadership roles and serving the project in this way.

Kat Moir finished up her sessional contract in July, having come on board to support the delivery of the "Outclassed" project, funded by money from YouthLink. Kat's creative skills were put to great use throughout her time with J12 and she is missed by staff and young people alike. In August, J12 were pleased to welcome Calum MacLeod to the staff team as Project Worker; he introduces himself here.

Youth Hub

The Headteacher at Smithycroft Secondary approached J12 with an opportunity for staff to be embedded within the school throughout the week in a new "Youth Hub" – a place where young people who were struggling with the school day could come for support. It was clear that in order to take up this opportunity J12 would need to take on another member of staff. The £15,000 from Smithycroft's Pupil Equity Funding allowed J12 to establish this new work by employing a new Project Worker. J12 staffs the Hub 4 mornings and 1 afternoon a week, with staff taking turns on a rota. The other parts of the week are covered by the school's worker from FARE, another local project. Time spent in the Hub is varied, some days are very busy and others very quiet – the role here is very much about responding to the needs that present on any given day. Sometimes that is providing breakfast for a young person who hasn't eaten, sometimes it is listening and supporting a young person who is very upset about something that has happened either at home or in school or it could be resolving conflict between pupils or providing space for young people to do their school work outside of the classroom. **Give thanks for the opportunities this presence in Smithycroft gives J12 staff and pray that they will provide good support to staff and pupils.**

Hello! I'm Calum and I'm the newest member of staff here at Junction 12. I am originally from Inverness, moved to a small village called Carloway on the Isle of Lewis when I was 9 and have been in Glasgow since I was 17. After school, I went to study Community Development at university and discovered my passion for working with young people throughout the city of Glasgow. I nearly joined the Police Force last year, but Covid-19 interrupted those plans. So, after much prayer and replanning, I found this role with J12 being advertised, and here I am! I have met the most amazing people in my 4 months here, from young people to staff to volunteers. So far, my highlights have been developing relationships with the young people and the camps, which makes me so excited to see what next year will bring!

Summer Programme

No camps, no residentials, no overnights, COVID strikes again…but J12 rolls on. Despite restrictions and limitations the staff filled the summer with a whole bunch of activity days and trips from Perthshire to Ayrshire.

The summer began with 4 activity days organised in partnership with SU. J12 staff and young people met with instructors from Alltnacriche for a day of activities at Bankfoot Parish Church. Each day began with some archery tag and then in the afternoon there was an opportunity to try fire lighting, wood carving and an array of wild and wonderful outdoor games and challenges. Plenty of fun was had and the weather could not have been any better - a theme throughout the summer programme.

Afternoon trips to Pinkston Watersports Centre came next. The young people had a brilliant time learning how to kayak and paddle board. Challenges such as trying to cross a floating bridge of paddle boards and jumping into the canal added lots of fun. The final trip ended with a contest for the best jump in and Jen shocked everyone with an amazing belly flop – truly spectacular!

Later on in the summer came 4 activity days at Craufurdland Castle. One of the groups had a go at the Tree Top Trials (an obstacle course in the trees – very nerve racking) and on the other days the young people spent their time crate climbing, tree climbing and learning archery.

For those of the more creative persuasion the J12 staff ran an art club at Smithycroft Secondary School. The 3 sessions involved ink marbling, clay moulding and block printing.

Alongside these programmed events the team ran some bespoke outings for smaller groups of young people. For example the J12 seniors headed to Gowanbank for a BBQ one evening and they also had a day trip which included Jurassic Parrrr cazy golf, a McDonald's and some games in Levengrove Park. Other young people had small trips to Soccer World, Drumpellier Park, Adventure Planet and some of the girls did some baking in the Base.

The staff are very thankful to God for all the volunteers who helped drive minibuses, donned wetsuits and got stuck in to help the staff run all of these trips and activities over the summer.

Nurture

Nurture Groups have again been a big part of the work in primary schools. The nurture groups give the children some time out of the classroom and provide activities that helps them to engage the sensory part of their brain. This in turn will enable the children to begin to build meaningful and trusting relationships. Activities have included making play-dough, slime, mud cakes and potions – "messy play" which of course is always a hit with the children who love to make a mess! The children have also done sessions that focused on beat and rhythm. Many of the children struggle to form secure attachments so it's great to provide a time and place where they can feel safe and have fun with each other. Most of this work was done in Cranhill Primary over the last 4 months and the plan is to continue with this over the next 6 months. Nurture groups began in Carntyne after the October week and will continue next term.

Libby and Calum ran an Emotional Literacy programme with the whole P7 class in Carntyne. It was very good to have this opportunity again as Covid restrictions prevented this happening last year. This programme helps the children to recognise and name feelings in themselves and others. It is hoped this programme can be run with P6s in both Carntyne and Cranhill next term.

The highlight of the term for the children was a huge trip to Adventure Planet Playcentre at the beginning of December. It was brilliant to be able to so something like this again and the children were excited for days beforehand! **Please give thanks for the relationships being built with these children, most of whom staff hadn't met before and pray for the ongoing work in both Carntyne and Cranhill.**

SU Groups & Camp

What a relief it was when COVID restrictions eased enough to allow the SU groups to start up again and eased to the extent that residentials could once again take place. After months of waiting the overt spiritual input of J12 got underway. Two camps for S1-3s ran in the October week as well as a weekend away for the seniors in November. Lunchtime and after-school SU groups restarted in the primary schools; Cranhill, Carntyne, Avenue End and Sunnyside and in Smithycroft.

In total 37 young people attended the 2 October camps and all of them did amazingly well especially those who were away from home for the first time. During their time at camp the young people spent their days doing lots of outdoor activities; bikes, archery, bouldering, footgolf, low ropes and high ropes. In the evening the J12 team spent some time sharing the story of Joseph with the young people, using videos and group discussions they learned about God's existence and his interest in them despite life's ups and downs. Residentials do tend to be the highlight for any youth work project so having the opportunity to take that many young people away was a great blessing.

23 seniors (S4-S6) went to Alltnacriche for a weekend in November. Over the weekend the young people had a go at Alltnacriche's many activities with zip lining and archery being the clear favourites. The teaching programme explored the events leading up to the cross, the crucifixion and the amazing resurrection of Jesus. It was encouraging to see that by the third session the young people were really engaging with the material and one of them commented after the weekend that they had “really appreciated the time to reconnect with God”.

Illuminate (S5-6s) began meeting in person again at the end of August and despite some interruptions because of Covid it was great to have a consistent group of enthusiastic young people coming along. The staff saw much less of this age group in the last school year so it was brilliant to have them back enjoying each other's company and exploring the gospel of Mark together. **Please pray for these young people as they explore faith, study for exams and think ahead to their futures.**

In Smithycroft a brand new S1-S2 group started with looking at the story of Moses and God's rescue of his people from Egypt. The S3 group looked at the life of Jesus through the eyes of the people who encountered him. The 4 Primary schools looked at the story of Elijah and how God used him to do some pretty amazing things. **The team give thanks for the privilege of being allowed into the schools to run these SU groups and for the opportunities to share God's word with the young people.**

Looking back, looking forward

The last 6 months have been a challenge of getting back into pre-Covid activities, setting up new activities such as the Smithy Hub and enabling James and Calum to settle into their roles as Project Workers. This has made for an extremely busy time with little time for looking at the big picture and considering how we should be going forward. On the positive side the last 3 months have felt much more like "normal" with large numbers at lunchtime drop-ins every day, outings for every age group taking place and of course going to camp.

As the staff look ahead to 2022 it is with a deep sense of gratitude to God for sustaining the project, the staff team and the young people over the last 2 years. Planning ahead is a challenge because the needs and number of young people can be overwhelming. **Please pray that the Board, Management Group and staff team will remain focused on the God who is sovereign over all and that they would always seek to discern his will for the way forward.**

Between January and March the plan is to continue running Emotional Literacy and Nurture Groups along with doing some 1-2-1 work in Carntyne and Cranhill Primary Schools. In Smithycroft, a Seasons for Growth group will run to give 8 young people in S1-2 tools to deal with the losses they've experienced. A Romance Academy Group looking at identity, self-worth and relationships for S3 girls that have an excellent relationship with J12 staff will also run. Staff will continue to operate the Smithy Hub 4 mornings and an afternoon each week and provide some 1-2-1 support.

Staff are excited to be running SU groups in all 5 schools again. **Please pray for good numbers at each of the groups, for staff to have enough time to prepare properly and for the children and young people to be engaged in and excited by the Bible stories.**

Please pray for strength, energy and good health for the staff team as they begin another busy term.

Prayer Points

- Romance Academy and Seasons for Growth Groups in Smithycroft – please pray the young people identified for these groups would be willing to take part, engage positively in the group sessions, build good relationships with J12 staff and really benefit from being part of the groups.
- 1-2-1 Work – please pray that young people being supported will be in school regularly to allow some consistency to this work and that this support will help them to manage very challenging situations in their lives.
- Nurture and Emotional Literacy Groups in Primary Schools – please pray that staff communicate clearly and continue to develop trusting relationships with the children.

SU Groups

P6-7 Groups: Tuesday lunchtime – Avenue End & Carntyne; Thursday Lunchtimes – Cranhill & Sunnyside
S1-2 Group: Monday after school; S2-3 Group: Wednesday after school; Illuminate: Tuesday evening

We are thankful to be planning a full programme of camps for 2022 as follows:
2-9 April: S1-3 at Alltnacriche
13-15 May: P6-7 at Lendrick Muir
25 June – 2 July: S1-3s at Alltnacriche and Scoughall; 30 July – 6 August S4-6s at Alltnacriche

- Please pray that we will be able to recruit people to make up full teams for all events, that young people will return their booking forms without too much need for chasing these up and for all the preparations that need to be done in the midst of busy term work.

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