

Christmas in Secure Care – guest blog from young people at Good Shepherd Centre, Bishopton

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We are so excited for our Christmas Party. The games hall has been transformed. 🎄👶 pic.twitter.com/UCCPlpA6W4

– Good Shepherd Centre (@GSCBishopton) [December 19, 2019](#)

The festive season is such a happy time of year, where families and friends enjoy spending time together. However, for some it can also be one of the most difficult times. This is especially true for young people living in secure care. The reality for most of the young people living at the Good Shepherd Centre is that they do not get to spend Christmas day with their families. The majority of the young people living with us have had to deal with huge challenges and have faced trauma in their lives, so for some Christmas time itself may hold unhappy memories.

We asked all our young people what their Christmas wish would be and almost everyone said, 'to be at home for Christmas'. Blake* said he loves and misses his Gran's cooking at Christmas including the sprouts! So, here at the Good Shepherd Centre it's important that every year we really work hard together to offer festive events and experiences which children and young people can enjoy, just like many other families do.



This year, the staff team who support young people across our care houses, Education and support departments, has been blown away by the kindness, talent and effort that young people have shown during the preparations.

In the Media class students designed their own digital Christmas cards. They did a fantastic job and the results are really professional. Young people and staff also worked together to choose and plan the decorations in the care houses which all look very Festive.



Digital Christmas cards created by residents of Good Shepherd, Bishopton

We also got involved in one of the newest traditions 'Elf on the Shelf'. We had a naughty elf in the Home Economics class, he tried to 'tap dance' but he kept falling in the sink!



Young people were really keen to support *Save the Children* and took part in the annual Christmas Jumper Day, which was an opportunity to be silly and

raise money for charity at the same time.



Staff of Good Shepherd Bishopton show off their Christmas jumpers

We have a really good relationship with Erskine Care Home for Veterans. We invited them to our Big Soup Share in October, which involved young people choosing recipes and making 3 different soups to serve to our guests from Erskine, made from vegetables grown in our garden. It was such a success, the young people loved hearing the stories as much as the older guests loved telling them their stories. Two young people wanted to invite Erskine guests back for Christmas and came up with the idea of staging a Vintage Christmas Party.



Residents of Good Shepherd had the idea of hosting a Vintage Christmas for residents of Erskine Care Home for Veterans

Goodies were baked and setting the table and decorating the room was an opportunity to get creative and festive. We also created a choir; they rehearsed before and after school for two weeks solid. Their hard work and dedication paid off as the veterans thoroughly enjoyed the singing and the intergenerational respect and affection was lovely to see. In fact, our 'Vintage Christmas' was such a huge success that it may now become an annual event in the GSC calendar.



Getting Ready for the 'Vintage Christmas celebrations



The hall all set up to welcome the Veterans for their Vintage Christmas

Our Christmas Party is such a fantastic day, it is a worthy event to end the year. This year the celebration involved 140 guests including young people living here, their important people, professionals and partners involved in the work that we do at Good Shepherd Centre.

The staff all work tirelessly to make sure the day is as magical as it can be for the young people. Getting dressed up for the Christmas party is an event in itself, some young people had been planning their outfits for weeks. Maisie* bought her outfit online and looked fabulous, as did everyone.

The games hall is transformed into a dining area filled with Christmas lights, a fireplace for Santa and his Elf to give out presents to the young children and of course a Real Christmas Tree. We watched a film showcasing

all our highlights of 2019. We had an awards ceremony celebrating all our achievements and of course we had our Christmas dinner with all the trimmings served by our staff!

Insert picture named 'hall transformed'

As our guests arrived they were treated to Christmas songs sung by the choir from St Fillan's primary school.



***not young people's real names**

The post [Christmas in Secure Care – guest blog from young people at Good Shepherd Centre, Bishopton](#) appeared first on [Justice and Safety](#).