



Newsletter April 2021



Young people We currently have 24 young people living in our houses and we have welcomed 7 new arrivals since the 30th October. In recent weeks we have welcomed a girl arrival which is the first

girl to arrive in nearly 6 months. The young people enjoyed some trips in the autumn term but obviously have been in lockdown pretty much since November. This has been challenging for them, but our support team have worked hard give exceptional care and support during this time.

Christmas



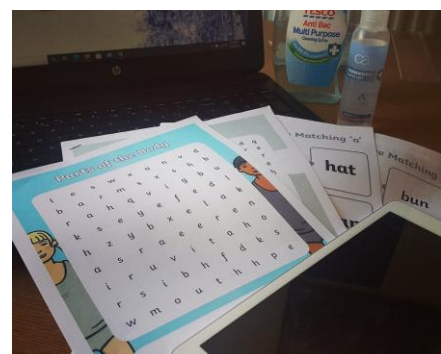
Although a few months ago now it's good to mention Christmas because the team organised meals at each of the Baca houses which were really special times. A Turkish takeaway was ordered and everyone played games. The young people and support staff enjoyed spending some relaxing time together in each house. One staff member later sent an email to the organiser saying...*"Just wanted to say a big thank you so much for all the hard work you put into getting the party sorted. It was really good and I left it feeling like I had a full heart!"*

Purchasing Houses

We continue to look for houses to purchase and through the SASC loan we are thrilled that two houses have been purchased in Loughborough and the purchase of a flat should complete in the next few weeks. Both houses have needed some DIY work and decorating. The purpose of the flats will be for post 18 young people who are ready to move into independent accommodation. We aim to purchase a third house by the summer.

Education

After the first lockdown last year, the education team returned to working face to face in May and over the last 10 months education has remained consistent with no cancellations even when staff are sick or isolating. Having observed the difficulties the young people have found with learning online, the team have been quicker to introduce the young people to technology and the possibility of working remotely by running a few trial sessions. Our young people are classed as vulnerable children and so were able to continue their education face to face during lockdown. The team have been teaching both face to face and online to ensure there are a safe number of students in the classroom each day.



We currently have 8 young people on a regular morning timetable, 5 of which are working towards Entry 1 exams this year. Two of the young people are 16 and therefore attending Baca college in the

morning and Limehurst Secondary in the afternoon. We have two new arrivals who the team are currently assessing for entry level. The Baca's teachers have also worked really hard with our college students to ensure continuity of education throughout the year.

Volunteers

In total we have worked with 30 amazing volunteers over the last year. During each lockdown educational mentoring has been online and to facilitate this, we have purchased more reading books, so the young person working at home can have a copy of the same book as the volunteer. This has helped the online sessions be as productive as possible. Through the commitment of both our young people and volunteers most sessions have been able to continue online during each lockdown.

Art Therapy

Whilst each lockdown has made it hard to provide therapeutic support, our art therapist has made the most of the opportunities when she could by meeting with the young people either through video calls, producing art videos or meeting them face to face when it was possible too. She has provided 1:1 support to 15 young people over the last year. It has been a mentally challenging year for many of our young people and Art therapy has been both vital during this difficult time but will be equally as vital going forward.



Fundraising As part of the Christmas 'Safe Home' campaign we held a Gingerbread House Challenge in which over 30 people took part. It was really great fun and Marta from the Bom Bom Patisserie was the judge and chose the 3 winners. (Photo: Gingerbread house made by one of our young people) We also produced a compelling video about what home means to one of our ex Baca young people as part of the campaign.

Although it is currently difficult to meet face to face we are digitally engaging with schools and churches and plan to launch the 3000 Mile Challenge during Refugee week in June.

Activities before lockdown (these activities took place before lockdown was announced in November 2020- Ice skating and playing pool)

The young people have been able to continue with 1-1 football coaching with an intern during this most recent lockdown which has really helped their mental and physical well being.



Thank you for your support