

Volunteer Awards from Fresh Start



Hundreds of Edinburgh's homeless households have been helped settle into their new homes thanks to generosity of local schoolchildren – who were recently honoured for their community spirit.

St George's Lower School for Girls received a Community Volunteer Award from Edinburgh's homelessness resettlement charity Fresh Start for its support in helping previously homeless families make a house a home.

Children from the school have collected items to go in Fresh Start's Starter Packs for the last few years, providing invaluable support for the charity, which survives on donations to be able to make up the packs.

Every year, Fresh Start makes up and distributes around 9,000 packs, which provide the basics for new households to survive.

Keith Robertson, Managing Director, said: "The support of St George's Lower School has meant hundreds of new households in Edinburgh have been able to make a house a home. These packs provide basics like bedding to keep warm at night, curtains to close the world out, crockery to eat dinner on.

"Without the kind of community spirit show by St George's Lower School, we would struggle to continue to be able to provide the support we do."

Head of Lower School Marjorie Hall said: “It’s been an honour to help provide goods for the packs – all the school children who have taken part have learnt a lot. They make houses to provide the goods in, which helps them to make the connection between being homeless and getting a house. It’s an important life lesson for them – that homelessness can happen to anyone.”

The school’s award was one of a number of awards, given out at the charity’s annual Volunteer Awards on Friday (November 8).

Every year Fresh Start volunteers, staff and directors nominate volunteers to get an award – Starter Pack Volunteer, Hit Squad Volunteer, Church Representative Volunteer, Community Volunteer and Corporate Volunteer.



Other award winners were:

Evelyn Scott from Colinton, who received an award for being an outstanding Starter Pack volunteer.

Tony Shephard from Abbeyhill, who received an award for being an outstanding Hit Squad volunteer. These volunteers help to decorate homes of Fresh Start clients.

Jack Simpson from Craiglockhart, who received an award for his work as a Church Representative.

The award for Corporate Volunteers went to Lloyds Banking Group.

Mr Robertson added: “At Fresh Start we depend on the support of our volunteers and the donations that come in, which is why we take a moment each year to honour those who help us so much.”

PHOTO: Two representatives from St George's Lower School for Girls pick up the school's Community Volunteer Award from Fresh Start Convener Russell Barr