

BASR Bethlehem Arab Society for Rehabilitation

McCabe pilgrim groups are often hosted to lunch at BASR where they meet the Director, Edmund Shehadeh and see first hand a remarkable work of comprehensive care in a Bethlehem now sadly isolated behind the separation Wall. The McCabe Educational Trust and the McCabe pilgrims who visit are helping maintain this work which survives *entirely* on voluntary donations.



The Bethlehem Arab Society for Rehabilitation (BASR)

began as a Cheshire Home in an old house in Bethlehem, providing care for a few physically disabled children. After it was handed over to the Bethlehem Arab society in 1975, the work grew and, in 1990, the society's dream came true when land on Beit Jala hill, on the outskirts of Bethlehem, was bought and a new, purpose-built, centre erected. Care has been taken with the architecture to ensure that the residents do not feel shut in and there are big windows with lovely views over Bethlehem, Jerusalem and the Jordan Valley, lots of plants and bright colours everywhere.

The society helps badly disabled young children and is able to give intensive treatment, including surgery, usually over a three to six month period, after which they return to their families. The centre concentrates on early intervention (which often prevents more serious disability) and as the children are very young, the mothers spend a lot of time at the Centre where they learn how to care for their children when they return home. Many staff are themselves disabled and a witness to the children and mothers that disability need not mean a lifetime of dependence.

As well as good medical care BASR provides school lessons to the children during their time at the Centre and there is a busy outpatients department, a hydrotherapy pool and Orthopaedic workshop.

A Success Story

From Belper in Derbyshire a heart-warming story of individual donations, raffles, teachers and parents from a local school, a carol service and a toy fair. The result was £1,750 and the prospect of a completely different life for one Palestinian girl.

Suha Thawabteh is a four year old girl living near Bethlehem with developmental delay and club feet. She also has vision problems. On pilgrimage, this party from Belper saw the need and decided to do something about it. Gifts such as this are life changing and central to the ethos of the McCabe Educational Trust as we seek to help those in need we encounter on our travels.



When the new building opened in 1990 BASR was able to expand its brief to include work with older children and adults providing medical treatment and rehabilitation services such as Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy and Speech Therapy. Vocational training was also introduced together with a workshop and hostel for young people. In the wider community BASR operates day-care centres completing its comprehensive caring brief in the Bethlehem area. For more information visit the BASR website: www.basr.org

It is a sobering thought that without the help of Christian partners overseas the work of BASR and organisations like it simply would not exist.

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