

.....Overseas Partner Fact Sheet.....

The Sheepfold

How it all started

The Sheepfold is a small Christian home that provides individual day and residential care to children and young people with severe special needs. It was started in 1991 by two British ladies (one of whom, Mary Rewers, is the current Director) in their flat in Beit Jala, a small village next to Bethlehem in the West Bank, to provide residential and day care in the warm, cheerful, family environment of a small home. In 1994, the work moved to Beit Sahour, another small Palestinian Christian Arab village just outside of Bethlehem. This village is often better known as the site where the angels appeared on that first Christmas – in fact, The Sheepfold is located directly next to the Roman Catholic Shepherds' Field Church. It is also believed to be the site of Ruth and Boaz's field.



Key facts

Founded: 1991

Location: Shepherds' Fields,
Bethlehem

First Grant from BibleLands: 2000



Current Activities

The Sheepfold provides residential and day care to children aged 5 – 10 years on a one-to-one basis. About 12 children attend as day students, whilst up to 5 girls, whose families are unable to care for them, receive residential care. Each child receives an individual programme of care, including activities aimed at their ability level, as well as medical and dental check-ups. The Sheepfold often uses the services of the Bethlehem Arab Society for Rehabilitation (another of BibleLands' Overseas Partners), at a reduced cost.

The Sheepfold works closely with the children's families, showing them how to care for their child's needs. Services are provided completely free of charge, as it is intended primarily to reach out to disadvantaged, low income families.

The priority is to reach out to those who have been refused by other institutions, usually because their disabilities are so profound. These are the children who are most in need of, and able to benefit from, the one-to-one care that a small family unit like The Sheepfold can provide.

The Sheepfold has continued to provide its vital care despite the current Intifada, which began in 2000, although the violence, sieges and military curfews occasionally force it to close. However, during these times The Sheepfold undertakes a rather different, but equally vital role, distributing humanitarian aid (food, blankets and medicines) to needy families in the local community.

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