

SPACE FOR EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

Bradford College students unveil an adult sensory room at city rock school

BRADFORD College students BECKY VARNEY, NOORJAHAN BEGUM and EMMA TESIC have created a new sensory space for young people attending Bradford School of Rock and Media (SORM).

Here the students write about their experience of developing the space:

We were asked to design and create a new and upgraded sensory space for the people who attend SORM.

Originally the room was a blank canvas - black walls and ceilings and a mish-mash of home-made sensory objects.

The adults who attend SORM loved to use this space to relax and play on the Nintendo Wii mainly.

We were very privileged to be given this project and we delved straight into research on the best sensory objects for adults specifically.

We found through research and a visit to another sensory place that sensory facilities are often based around both adults and children and did often lean more towards the children's sector.

We wanted to avoid this and give the people of SORM a place where they can feel equal and away from the day-to-day discrimination some of them are facing.

Under the Care Act (2014) we are embedding the individuals of SORM's wellbeing and accountability with the driving force behind our knowledge and skills of care and support.

The Act states very clearly that the general duty for a social worker, for example, is to promote the wellbeing of the individual and the outcomes that matter to them!

The theme we all agreed upon was an underwater theme. This came from the knowledge of understanding the calming qualities and benefits that water can have on not only people with disabilities, but people without disabilities also.

We have been looking forward



The completed sensory room at SORM in Bradford. Left: Hard at work on developing the facility

to our opening day of the SORM sensory room, which took place last Thursday, and seeing everyone's faces. There was food, floating fish balloons, pop and of course some music!

We hope that this sensory space can be enjoyed for many years to come and that it brings much happiness and joy.

We want people to use this space to be themselves and to feel included and without judgement. If this happens, we will know that we have done our jobs well!

* Based in Little Germany, SORM is a music enterprise which delivers workshops to people of different abilities and backgrounds, including young people with learning difficulties and NEET.

It has a recording studio and learning centre, where people can learn skills in music, performing, arts, teamwork

and problem-solving and community action. SORM users also have the chance to work with professional musicians.

Over the years, bands at SORM have performed at the Royal Albert Hall, rock festivals across the region, and at a warm-up party for American rockers Pearl Jam. Director John Bolton, a youth and community development worker and a drummer and percussionist with local bands for more than 30 years, says the ethos at SORM is to "have a go, regardless of experience".

Adds John: It's about learning skills and getting the chance to perform at gigs, which is great experience and a confidence boost.

"It's really fulfilling when someone who comes here not even with the confidence to talk to anyone ends up playing in a band on stage."

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