

Willow Lantern Project 2010

The project ran at the Underground Centre every Monday evening for five weeks and as part of the Duke of Edinburgh awards scheme at Uplands School every Wednesday for four weeks.

The Underground Youth Centre

This group consisted of young people who already engage in other sessions at the centre with the exception of one young man who had just moved into the area. His mother explained that he had problems making friends and that his social skills were lacking.

Tim (artist) empowered the young people to work both independently and as part of a team. He explained and demonstrated each stage and then encouraged the young people to try it themselves.

The project covered the following Every Child Matters outcomes:-

Be Healthy

Young people developing social skills and realising their achievement through hard work. Confidence and self esteem improved through the project due to trying and completing a variety of new tasks.

Stay Safe

listening to health and safety instructions regarding tools and materials and when working at the lake.

Enjoy and Achieve

enjoying learning a new skill and being proud of the achievement at the end as well as showing off their work to the public during the pageant

Make a positive contribution

Young people committed to making lanterns for a public community event and some young people were able to lead others in some of the tasks.

Outcomes for both groups

The young people improved and developed the following skills:-

- Listening skills
- Team building
- Social skills

- Confidence and self esteem
- Decision making
- Planning and organising

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At the lakes, the young people were shown how to pull their duck along in the water. Due to the size of the structure, four young people would need to pull it along with bamboo sticks. The group decided on four people and worked hard as a team to pull the duck through the water. Two young people walked along the bank in front of the others to check for uneven ground or small trees. A warning was given to the others if this was the case and a series of complicated moves were involved by the group to ensure the lantern would not get tangled up.

There was a great sense of achievement from the group. They were very proud of themselves and are already looking forward to the next one.

Uplands School

This group is the new DofE bronze group. The young people have learning and physical disabilities.

This project will go towards the skills section of the DofE. The group began by looking at pictures of animals to encourage them to choose a subject for their lantern. There were many different choices and the group were split into four smaller groups.

They chose to make the following:-

- fish
- star
- human figure
- butterfly

Some of the young people were keen and enthusiastic whereas others were anxious at first and did not want to engage.

Sue (artist) explained and demonstrated at each stage with each group independently and encouraged the young people to try each task.

One young person has an issue with touching anything which is 'messy'. This included the glue and tissue paper; however, by the end of the project the

young person was holding the corners of the tissue paper and putting it onto the structure. The staff were amazed to see this.

Another young person had an issue with pasting the glue onto the tissue paper so she put her hand on top of staff's hands and pushed their hands along to make them paste the paper instead.

All of the young people had a chance to try out each task at each stage throughout the project in their own way.

One young man took responsibility for unscrewing the power boxes for each lantern and testing out the batteries to make sure the lantern would light up.

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The group were happy and proud as they paraded their lanterns during the parade. One young person who hardly every speaks, kept saying to a member of staff 'I'm happy – I'm happy'. They held up their lanterns and shouted 'uplands' 'uplands'.

This project was a great success and Uplands have collected their lanterns to display at the school.