

Case Study: Blurton's Children Centre

STOKE-ON-TRENT - UNITED KINGDOM

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As part of our socio-economic programme, we decided to carry out a project which would benefit people who live close to our site. We initially contacted places in our local community to reach out to projects that needed support with regards to the donation of time and resources. As a company, we feel passionately about supporting our local area and giving back where we can.

We approached Blurton Children's Centre which is located less than two miles away from our main site in Trentham, Stoke-on-Trent. The facility is a council-run project which helps the local communities of Blurton and Newstead by providing support and services to families in the nearby area. The centre is predominantly used by families with children who are under the age of 5.

Due to council funding, the centre's budget does not currently stretch to include improving outdoor facilities. This meant that there was a great opportunity for the company to give back by helping out with a regeneration project run by ourselves in collaboration with the staff from the centre to help make an area that would benefit those who use the centre.

Our initial objectives for the centre included, but were not limited to:

- Rejuvenating the reading area of the children's centre by weeding, planting, painting, sanding, jet-washing and defining pathways.
- Revamping the crèche area of the children's centre by making new equipment for the children to play with such as a water wall, a 'bug hotel' and a mud kitchen. Putting up bird boxes and bee apiaries, painting, planting, sanding, weeding, making sensory beds filled with aggregates and defining pathways.



Prior to commencing work, we had several meetings with the staff from the centre to find out exactly what they needed from us and how to best utilise the outdoor space. For the likes of the bug hotel, water wall feature and several other items, we were able to use our Training Centre apprentice workshop and our apprentices to either modify the items that the children's centre already had or to make new equipment for the children to use.

We completed the project over two days in July 2016. Over 40 people volunteered to help out with the project, over 30 of which were Goodwin apprentices, aged between 16-21. Our volunteers were not only enthusiastic and committed, but were genuinely happy to be given the opportunity to make a difference to people who live in the area in which we work.

We hope that by helping to develop this area, it is now more inviting for children to play and explore and use their skills to learn about the world around them. The outdoor area promotes children's learning and development in a fun way that means that local families will use the children's centre more and will subsequently utilise the services that the centre's 'Play and Learning' service can offer. This in turn will help the centre to reach more families from the local area and to ultimately identify more children and families who may need extra support.



We appreciate the opportunity and responsibility that we have to make a material contribution to the well-being of the people of Stoke-on-Trent. Socio-economic return is a fundamental part of our approach and engaging with our local community means that we can offer our support where it is truly needed; right on our door step, to local families and local people.