



S.H.E.D are a Derby based Community Interest Company, and we were thrilled to be able to support the design and installation of a mural for Littleover Community School.

It provides the school community with a bespoke, thought-provoking Mural that reflects the heart and soul of the school and its wider community. One of the many things that the pandemic has denied us is the chance to hear the voices of young people in our communities, particularly those for whom the isolation of lockdowns has added to isolation. We believe in providing opportunities for young people. We embrace the work of the inclusion programme in Derby; widening access and participation for all through creative practices, in order to create new pathways for learning.

This mural also responds to the need for creating a space for civic dialogue and social cohesion in relation to youth voice. This is at the very heart of what S.H.E.D is all about!

We were honoured to visit Littleover and run workshops with pupils, staff and governors to hear their views about what the school really means to them and the values, ethos and ambition for lifelong learning, caring and succeeding for all.

We hope the mural entices you to stop, look and reflect on what the community of Littleover shared with us – we heard them loud and clear and are proud that the school is future focused, bold, brave and an inclusive and diverse school – that celebrates you!

Dr Rhiannon Jones, Associate Professor (Civic), University of Derby.
Creative Director and CEO of Designing Dialogue CIC (S.H.E.D)

www.weareshed.co.uk

Working with SHED has been a productive, fruitful, and collaborative process which has culminated in an exciting site-specific mural that reflects the school's Aims. This project was originally initiated during Covid, when students were working in 'bubbles'. Using a proposed framework, students in Year 9 were very keen to put forward ideas that began to visually address the school's aims of Learning, Caring, and Succeeding. It has been an exciting journey to see S.H.E.D. build on these initial concepts and through workshops and feedback bring this to an exciting conclusion. Many thanks to the Senior Management Team, the Art Department, and the Site Team for their continued support through the development stages. A massive thanks to Dr Rhiannon Jones and the S.H.E.D. team for their tireless energy. I'm sure we will collaborate on future projects.

David Ashman, Co-ordinator of Creative Arts.

Littleover Community School

S.H.E.D is a conversation starter – shedding preconceptions about people and place.

S.H.E.D

The illustration of the mural shows both panels. It has used simple graphics following measurements provided to portray the door and side of the walls which are not covered by any wooden panel.

The Mural presents 3 Main Features:

- 6 Figures/Portraits representing various topics, subjects or aspects of the school experience.
- 1 Large ribbon that folds in and around the figures, a way to unify the art piece and represent the idea of community.
- The refracting prisms which give structure and a framework to place other components within.

Aside from these core features, there is supporting imagery, symbolism and iconography that further visually explores the ideas of success, learning and caring. These are embedded into the figures and around them too.

The Ribbon:

The use of the ribbon was a choice to represent the idea of success and community. It is also visually portrayed to be a path, racetrack, highway, and window used to represent various elements of the school journey. The use of the ribbon was a way to unify all the main figures and provide a stable visual arrangement. Ribbons are often used on presents, rewards, degrees, and other achievements, hence why the idea of a ribbon was fitting.

Aside from what's seen in the design I plan to add text to further add to the "journey" through learning, caring and succeeding. Text such as: "inclusion" reference to community, "resilience" in reference to learning and "ambition", with reference to succeeding. Other phrases, quotes and key words portraying a road to success will be used to further illustrate this. There is also a subtle layer, patterns, and textures from various cultures to further emphasise diversity. (An example of this can be seen on bottom right of panel 2 (Indian inspired pattern), as well as panel 1 bottom left (tartan inspired pattern.) It is also included top right of panel 2, with South African inspired patterns to make up the hair texture. I've left spaces so this can be imagined elsewhere on the ribbon.

The Refracting Prism:

The prism was a way of including a lot of the research, individuality, and personality of the students. Represented through a spectrum of colours. This not only emphasises themes found in the research such as - Inclusivity, Diversity, Culture and the LGBT community but also the varying identities and potential areas of the school experience.

The use of the prism breaks up the background and foreground in interesting ways that allow for each smaller visual component to have its own scene or space. Creating ones own sense of space is very important thing for an individual. Building spaces they can feel protected and safe in, hence the use of colour to case each defined fragment. The use of the prism was also a clever way to make sense and make the most of the original designs. Instead of three students looking at one point, have the figures set their sights on various things, casting a split of spectrums. As each person has individuality, different perspectives, and outlooks on school.

Both uses of ribbon and the prism set the trajectory for the design and assumed the main composition that had to be formed. This was a way to have the students still feel vibrant, radiant, connected yet all the same individual. With the prism and ribbon stretching over both panels it reinforces the idea that both murals are one scene rather than two separate moments. This dual piece highlights, the complex system of various elements that occurs all at once within school. Within each individual experience. With the figures focused on various things that still unite them through the prism and ribbon.

The 6 Figures:

Panel 1 - Left

Top Left - Ideas and Future Dreams

Mid Left - Perspective & Direction

Bottom Left - Inside Out/Input and Output

Panel 2 - Right

Top Right - Creativity & Expression

Mid Right - Processing Potential

Bottom Right - Wellbeing and Spirit

The Design Process

After considering and scanning through the feedback gathered from the workshop, themes of inclusivity, diversity, culture, LGBTQ+ and those with disabilities (visible or invisible), global majority communities were some of the recurring mentions. I along with the rest of the team understood these to be the student's perspectives regarding Learning, Caring and Succeeding. The feedback gave an insight into how the students interpreted the schools core values. The mere fact they could be themselves and speak their mind spoke volumes of the type of school Littleover Community School is inclusive, diverse, multicultural, filled with and caring towards multiple communities. This shows how the students related and connected with the school values.

Taking in mind the original designs, and artist inspiration, I had to find ways of balancing all these elements and fusing it into one cohesive piece, that flows, is fresh, dynamic and visually makes sense.

Design and Art Considerations:

The art style was inspired from modern flat style art. It gives a clear way to represent and convey imagery in a simple way. Objects will be layered with colour and various shades, rather than through blending.

We decided to pick a colour palette that could be used in various areas, multiple times. I would consider the piece to fit between a 3 - 5 colour palette (Yellow, Red, Blue, Orange and Purple), but varying shades housed within each colour. We decided this based on the time frame for the install. Blending would take more time beyond what has been contracted.

Stacking the heads allowed for full use of the background, making it dynamic and inventive. A focus on ensuring this artwork can last and be timeless was important for me as an artist, so instead of using sepia tones like that of the reference of artist: Caledonia Curry (which can present an older look), I decided to allow the colours to pop and again utilise the space surrounding the students as well as within them too. If we strictly stayed within the guidelines too much focus on the detailing, realism and portrayal of identities, it would cause for this to become the key purpose of the art piece. With this composition and blend of inward and outward body illustrations, it allows for the mural to feel alive, new and spread evenly across the whole mural. As opposed to bound up just in the bodies. We could make the mural more of a playground and journey rather than one singular thing.

- The use of lines in white or the darker colour (substitute for black) were used to emphasise certain elements, however as stated previously some of these could change due to creative purposes whether it enhances the look or not.

- Text was added in white or the substituted colour for black.
- Uniting the two panels to form one cohesive piece was important and was a great way of reinforcing the idea of community.
- Considering the ages of the school it was important creating a design that could represent all ages, and varying identities. Patterns and inspiration from varied cultural backgrounds were used to emphasize culture and diversity. The prism was used to represent the LGBT Community as well as any other varied individual. The design had to have the right balance of youth and maturity. Making it fun but also intellectual.

PANEL 1

1. Top Left - Ideas and Future Dreams:

Components:

1. Graduation Cap, Figures on top
2. Swimmers in the air
3. A Cloud Tree/Technolo-Tree
4. Buildings/Skyscraper, with Ladder to door.
5. Figure with Brain Included, within brain is lightbulb.
6. Hearing Aid
7. Bike rider on ribbon

This segment of the mural represents the future dreams you walk into and out of school with. The potential avenues one can be presented with. A city is used to represent the future and higher experiences to come. A ladder can be seen leading towards a door to represent doors of opportunity. Swimmers can be seen in the air, we made use of the prism effect to form the lanes of a swimming pool. The blues reinforce this visual illusion. A swimmer in the air is also used to represent possibility. The possibility to fly and exceed beyond what one considers themselves capable of. The focus on dreams and ideas is highlighted visually in the lightbulb and brain combination. This is what one experience of school can provide, an outlook towards the future and the possibilities that can be opened

through school and after. It was important to include visual components that include those with impairments and disabilities. A hearing aid was included as a way of representing this community. This is also to emphasise the fact that anyone is able to achieve and be recognised for their achievements, regardless the barriers and challenges one may face.

The floating graduation cap has smaller figures sat or standing on it. This is to reinforce the idea of success being a collective experience as well as individual. The graduation cap under them shows education and academia can be grounding and liberating at the same time. The

symbolism of the tree is about growth and establishing concrete roots. Ultimately, it's about growing towards the future you set your horizons upon.

Lastly, a figure is seen riding a bike up the ribbon, which further illustrates experiences of riding a bike to school, cycling as a sport or again the action of heading towards a destination.

2. Mid Left - Perspective and Direction:

Components:

1. Trophy with steps rising out of it
2. A Sign Post
3. Figure with Prism
4. Puzzle Pieces
5. School Building

This segment is to act as a mirror of the middle side of the 2nd panel. Both figures in the middle cast the refracted spectrum of colour through their sight. It was important to add this on both sides, with two different figures to promote equality and balance, hopefully covering a wide area of representation. This part addresses and introduces the idea of perspective, as well as reinforcing the idea of direction. A signpost can be seen, which will eventually include text. It points towards the doors of the school giving direction. The trio of the school building, trophy and the figure in the middle are tied together explaining the deeper idea behind success and its relation between students and the school institution. The students themselves are the success of the school. This is to elevate the student's self-perception, in order to motivate them, providing direction and self-appreciation for where they are going and how important their experience, and attendance at the school is, not just for their benefit but also seen as valuable to the school

The inclusion of the puzzle piece is about problem solving. Finding solutions to problems can provide direction, an example of actively attempting to solve social issues give the students a sense of responsibility and incentive to be proactive within the world and its communities, but furthermore in their school experience. A message to stand against discrimination and unkindness.

3. Bottom Left - Inside Out:
Components:

1. LGBTQ Flag Arrangement
2. Figure with puzzle pieces fragmenting out
3. States of Matter Symbols
4. Science Tools
5. Bunsen Burner
6. Yin Yang Symbol
7. Tartan Pattern in the Background
8. Stepping Stones

This lower segment is a more open and generic portrayal of learning and the process. This is about making sense of things, including yourself and the world around you. Science objects can be seen, with icons which mimic solid, liquid and gaseous states of matter. With the figure observing this, this opportunity of acquiring knowledge causes us to begin our discovery of learning and growth. The puzzle pieces fragmenting outwards contribute to this. Along with the puzzle pieces fragmenting, the Ribbon pays homage to the LGBTQ+ Community Rainbow flag. Understanding on relation to self and the wider world.

Rainbows are a symbol of hope in many cultures. They appear often during a rainstorm when the sun shines onto water and symbolises hope, unity and happiness. This is a great symbol to include in the mural as it links with all these conversations about community and positivity the students had. This also links with the LGBT+ community.

PANEL 2

4. Top Right - Creativity and Expression:
Components:

1. Figure with locked Hair
2. Earphones and Music Symbols
3. A selection of pens, and brushes
4. A classroom and whiteboard in ribbon
5. Planner
6. Stairs of books
7. Basketball & Net
8. The World Clock

This segment on the second panel is used to express creativity and imagination. A range of school related items and activities are present. With a classroom being portrayed within the ribbon. The figures hair flows, levitating, in the hair are patterns inspired by South African fabrics and textiles. The figure has earphones in, with the sound wave headphone symbol 'ringing' outwards, as well as musical symbols floating behind. The treble clef icon is used to also represent the figures hair 'edges'. This being a stylistic choice of how to present ones hair ("doing your edges"). A selection of creative tools float ahead of the figure which has a Planner elevated in their hands. On their hand is a stack of books, leading towards the planner like a stairs.

The basketball and net is another representation of sports placed within the ribbon, positioned under the class room, the net is positioned directly from the open planner. The World Clock was a way to fuse the liberating world of expression and creativity with the structured world of time and study. An understanding on investment into passion and the application of order provides a steady, free flowing mindset readying students for what they would like to excel and achieve in.

We received a lot of feedback about the students' hobbies and interests relating to pop culture even mentioning music artists that inspire and influence their creativity. Music is a great way of showing freedom and individuality.

5. Mid Right - Processing Potential:
Components:

1. Figure with Safety Visor and Corridor shown in head
2. Gears
3. Football Match
4. Dove
5. Signposts
6. Buildings

This segment of the mural is focused on illustrating potential and processes. Within the figures head is a snapshot of the school corridors. As students walk through the schools' halls, and navigate the school, they undergo processes of unlocking potential behind every door. This is what initiates this fracturing of the prism. Behind the head are gears turning and rotating. This correlates with industry. The industrial application academic spaces such as school provide are necessary to understanding where to apply potential in the world.

This figure also represents intention, and as the students evolve and grow through school the intention to radiate peace within their daily and future endeavours is shown as a dove flying.

6. Bottom Right - Wellbeing and Spirit:
Components:

1. Figure with scales and frequencies over face
2. Best Teacher Mug
3. Floating Symbols of Belief
4. Hand with Heart Growing Plant
5. Mini Figure with Umbrella covering Other figure
6. Natural Background (trees)
7. Race Track & Hurdles Ribbon
8. Book Combined with Ribbon

The lower segment of the mural is dedicated towards the role teachers provide. The figure embodies the guides many of the students will encounter throughout their experience at school. Many students mentioned in the feedback there being a lack of the teachers presence in the original designs. With no real way of having a figure visually identify or portray teachers, the addition of the "Best Teacher" Mug can be correlated with the figure.

Including the addition of smaller components that reinforce the idea of wellbeing, listening, balance, and an almost ethereal, or spiritual presence is given within this segment as the colours reflect a more wholesome, and grounded tone. The scales are used to represent balance and a sense of fair judgement teachers and other staff must assume whilst attending the institution.

There is also a figure in a wheelchair, to further emphasis disability awareness, need for inclusion and acceptance. There are also small stepping stones within the panel, exploring how being at school, taking small or big steps, is about being on a journey of life long learning. The waveform illustration is to show appreciation towards the staff member's abilities to be able to listen and be attentive towards all needs and wishes of the students. The wave form completes the scales to demonstrate the process a member of staff may go through when guiding students. At the bottom of the scales are two figures that represent a staff and a student.

The ribbon forming into lanes of a race track and finish line is to represent the eventual goal and point of reaching success. The race track and ribbon eventually make the red marker of a book. This is to demonstrate to students, that success in education and academia can lead you to further learning, further knowledge.

The use of hurdles on the race track is to show challenges that can enact as barriers slowing down the journey to success. Nonetheless support from the community and belief in self can cause one to eventually reach their goal. Teachers are what really help you get through the journey of education and experience of school. The background of the natural environment is to reinforce focus on wellbeing and care.

Adoniah Haslam
Lead Artist and Mural Concept Design



Images of the process, artists hard at work! From left to right: Njomza, Steven, Oshaller and Adoniah



Littlelover Mural Design Workshop, led by Dr Rhiannon Jones, Associate Professor Civic. Supported by Aleks and Adoniah S.H.E.D Artists.

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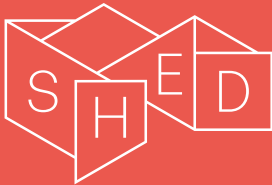
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