



Junior Designers taking the industry by storm

Most businesses have engaged the help of a design agency at some point; whether it's for a new logo design, marketing material, or office interior style - the work of a professional designer plays an important role in modern business life. But one creative agency in Hull has a unique set of designers at the helm.

The *Junior Design Factory* is a working design studio run entirely by young people aged 8 to 16.

The junior designers work on proposals for real paying clients, and the young team take the lead roles in design, project management, and promotion of their work.

There is a professional support team of designers on hand, but they are very much in the background, as founder Jason Bowers explains:

*'It's the young people who make the key creative decisions here and it's up to them to present their design proposals to their clients. Yes, we're there to help them, but it's **their** ideas that go forward to pitch.'*

The *Junior Design Factory* has an impressive portfolio of work, ranging from branding and logo design, through to promotional material, and marketing campaigns for recycling companies.

So, what's it all about?

The young designers at the *Junior Design Factory* are all young people who learn differently. Some simply find the standard curriculum a challenge, whilst others have diagnosed specific learning difficulties. The *Junior Design Factory* introduces the creative sector to them as an area in which they might excel in future life - an invaluable lifeline for children who struggle in classroom or exam settings.

Whilst these young people are clearly having fun and expressing themselves creatively, they are also developing essential skills; self-confidence, team working, and problem solving to name just a few. The children are challenged, exposed to the 'real world' of design by liaising with businesses and clients. All of this is done

within a supported environment where each child is nurtured and helped to develop skills that they can use through their education and into their eventual career paths.

Yasmin Holmes, a member of the professional team who supports the young designers has seen this development first hand:

'I've seen members of the design team come to us with barely any confidence to speak up, but just a few weeks later they are presenting their designs to professional clients. We give them time, and we help them recognize when they are doing well. There are no bad ideas in this studio.'

What do the clients have to say?

Paying clients at the *Junior Design Factory* may very well leave with a warm fuzzy feeling that they're supporting a worthy cause, but they also leave with a quality solution to their brief.

Steve Plater, owner of Dinostar Museum in Hull is a repeat client for the young design team:

'We always enjoy working with the Junior Design Factory. It's fun working with the team, and their work is top quality and very professional.'

Professional designer, Rebecca Shipham often visits the *Junior Design Factory* as an industrial rep:

'It's important that the young design team meet professional designers like me. It's a real eye opener for them when they learn that design is something they can get a job in. From what I see of the work they produce I'm absolutely certain there are some future professional designers in this team.'

How to get in touch with the Junior Design Factory

Check out the *Junior Design Factory* at www.juniordesignfactory.co.uk where you can send design briefs. Design briefs are selected for their suitability, and if the junior design team accept your brief they will get in touch with a quote.

Through the website you can enquire about getting involved either by joining the design team waiting list, by volunteering your time or by supporting through monetary donations.

The design team are also on twitter and Instagram @jnrdesignfactory.

The *Junior Design Factory* is supported by BBC Children in Need.