

For immediate release. With two jpeg images labelled: Roundhouse

Specialist school unveils eco-friendly 'Roundhouse' for movement and mindfulness

Portfield School in Christchurch has created an eco-friendly Roundhouse to give its students even more access to dance and movement therapy, music and yoga.

Portfield School in Parley is owned and operated by the charity Autism Wessex and provides specialist teaching and care for students aged 4 to 19 who hold an autism spectrum disorder diagnosis (ASD).

Autism is a lifelong developmental disability which affects how people perceive the world and interact with others.

Siún Cranny, CEO of Autism Wessex, said: "We are continually exploring ways to develop therapeutic processes at Portfield School. The Roundhouse came from our thinking around the important nature of the *environment* in which sessions on music and dance therapy and mindfulness occur."

Siún continued: "We held discussions with various playscheme developers about what kind of building we could create. From this came the idea for a circular space, built from sustainable materials, with a light focus at the pinpoint of the radius in the ceiling, producing a serene sense of calm and peace."

The Roundhouse cost £90k to build and has been funded entirely by Autism Wessex.

It was opened with an informal gathering on September 3 and will be used by all student age groups.

Siún added: "The building is simply stunning - a real testament to our continual investment to improve the quality of the environment at the school and something which will bring huge benefits to Portfield School students for many years to come."

Ends

Picture captions:

Roundhouse1- Portfield School Governor Vanda North and Carly Marchant, Dance Movement Therapist with Autism Wessex mascot Fidget at the official opening of Portfield School's Roundhouse facility for dance and movement therapy, music and yoga.

Roundhouse2 – The official opening of Portfield School's Roundhouse for dance and movement therapy, music and yoga.

www.autismwessex.org.uk

Information for Editors:

Autism Wessex is the leading regional charity providing specialist education, care and support to children and adults affected by autism.

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