

Portfield School's Got Talent!

TALENTED students from Autism Unlimited's Portfield School have taken to the stage at the Regent Centre in Christchurch, to showcase their musical and acting skills.



ALL-STAR CAST – Pupils from Autism Unlimited's Portfield School performed in their first Talent Show with music, singing and acting performances.

The first Talent Show to be staged by the specialist autism school, the evening performance featured singing, dancing and skits, watched by a packed audience of family, friends and staff.

Actor in Residence, who directed the show, Jane Herbert said: "The students worked very hard all term on their performances. It was great to see their creativity and imagination unfold.

"The performance day was a long one for the students and they behaved so professionally, and came together to support each other.

"The highlight of the night for me was seeing students watching from the wings celebrating their classmates and clapping along to their songs. There was tremendous buzz backstage at both their collective and individual achievements."

Portfield School in Parley Lane, provides a bespoke education for children aged 4-19, with an Autism diagnosis.

Its holistic curriculum includes not only education, but also therapy, the development of skills for life, independence, and a focus on accessing the world of work through a highly tailored work experience programme.

They have developed a programme of creative experiences including this one, where professional artists work with the students to co-create performances. The School's Musicians in Residence Andy Baker and Mathew Hovenden, have sensitively created the right environment for the young musicians to thrive and develop interests in performance.

The school ethos is entirely centred on the interests, talents and motivations of each young person. The richness of the curriculum is designed to be challenging, therapeutic and fun.

Siún Cranny, CEO of Autism Unlimited said: "I don't think there was a single person in the audience who wasn't impressed and moved by what we experienced. We have immensely entertaining students at school; seeing them together on stage confirmed this. Fundamentally it was a great evening of entertainment, laughter and happiness. We are beyond proud of our performers!"

"I know how much planning and hard work went into the show and I am hugely grateful to colleagues across the charity who worked so hard to make it happen. I heard from some students that they are already working on the next one!"

Ends

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