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Reflective Account 01

A group of local primary school children attended Laser Station for an end of year disco. The children were in year 6 and leaving their primary school to start their new journey at secondary school. The disco gives the children a chance to celebrate the time they've had together throughout their years at primary school. Thirty children attended the disco, all being extremely excited. Laser Station set a price of £15.50 per child, in this package the children had a DJ, UV accessories, a fresh buffet, drinks and two games of laser tag. This price was put in place hoping all children could attend and parents could afford the package. There were a handful of parents who could not afford the package, in this case the manager would have a quiet chat with them giving the child a free place, I felt this was a lovely gesture and no child was left out of the fun.

Preparing for the disco the team would pull down the black out blinds, turn on all the disco and laser lights and turn on the smoke machine. The venue would transform into a real party setting. All the staff would start an hour before the disco commenced to help set up and prepare, this included cooking and preparing all the buffet food which was made fresh that evening. The discos are a lovely idea as some children were not attending the same secondary school, giving them all a chance to connect one last time. During the disco I could hear the children chatting and laughing together, this was lovely to witness. They talked openly with all staff about their time at primary school and which secondary they were attending in September.

The DJ who was a well known local man, played all the latest music and played every request asked from the children. He would also play party games, these being - best dancer and musical statues, all the team would join in on these games. The atmosphere was

absolutely wonderful and full of energy. The disco would last for two and a half hours usually being from 6pm until 8.30pm, some parents would stay and others would go into Carmarthen town to do a food shop or have dinner.

The whole experience of being a part of the disco was fantastic, to watch all the children relax and let loose on the dance floor was exhilarating. All the parents were ever so grateful, appreciating all the efforts that had gone into the disco. The children left the venue very happy, thoroughly enjoying every minute they had at Laser Station.

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Reflective Account 02

My work experience at Laser Station would often be on a Saturday and Sunday, starting at 11am and finishing at 6.30pm. On one occasion I attended on a Saturday morning, firstly we would turn on all the lights and equipment making sure the venue was ready for the day's customers. We as a team of staff would sit down and read through the day's diary giving us all full knowledge of each booking. On this occasion the manager soon realised there had been a fault with the online diary and soon noticed two birthday parties had been booked in at the same time. Usually there would be an hour between each booking ensuring their laser tag games would run back to back giving each group a full two hours. We quickly set a plan of action discussing how we were going to manage this mistake. Both parties were booked in for 12pm. The manager set each of us staff a role for the day, mine being on reception and helping with food preparation.

Both parties soon arrived, the manager calmly explained the situation that had occurred and reassured them that the parties would run smoothly but with a 15 minute delay allowing one of the groups to play a game of laser tag first. The manager offered the first drink ordered free of charge and apologised for the mistake. The party members were very happy with this offer. At Laser Station there are two large party tables available each seating up to 14 children, which allowed room for both parties to go ahead with plenty of space. This meant the customers did not feel cramped and uncomfortable.

The day was very busy and each member of staff really pulled together, working extremely well showing great team work. These efforts were visible to all the customers leaving them happy and comfortable in their environment. Both parties were a Silver package, this package would last for two hours and offered two games of laser tag, a pizza or hotdog,

slush puppy or soft drink of their choice and is priced at £12.50 per head. Both parties did run over time by 20 minutes, but that did not affect the rest of our day's bookings. Once both parties had ended the customers paid in full and thanked us staff for all our hard work, both leaving lovely reviews on our Facebook page and Trip advisor. This was a very intense but enjoyable experience to be a part of, leaving Laser Station that evening I felt that I had worked hard and learnt great multitasking skills to use in the future.

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Reflective Account 03

At my time working at Laser Station I had the opportunity to be a part of a huge event held at the venue. This event was held by an organisation called Leonard and Cheshire. Leonard and Cheshire are a company who support vulnerable and disabled individuals all over the UK (Leonard and Cheshire,2019,p.1). The manager at Laser Station was approached by the company looking for a venue in Carmarthen big enough to hold a dance competition called Strictly Cymru. Strictly Cymru was a competition for the individuals to take part in, all that was needed was willingness to move to a beat. This was the third of six regional heats that were being held throughout wales. Competitors from the local area would attend Laser Station every week day for two weeks prior to the judging day to practice their dances. The dances would range from fifties swing to hip hop.

Each practice day us staff would open up the venue at 9.30am to prepare for the groups to arrive at 10am. Extra staff were employed by the manager for this event ensuring a smooth running of each day. Laser Station has great disability access, having wide door openings and large disabled toilets. On arrival each guest would be given a menu sheet and choose a lunch option which was prepared freshly on the day. A small number of guests had severe disabilities where they needed their food to be soft for easing swallowing, this was catered very well by the staff and each individual's needs were met. Other members had their own money and purchased food and snacks during the day. Some days there would be up to 30 guests and care providers, all taking it in turns to practice their chosen dance.

Every session a dance teacher would attend and teach the individuals their dances, given them a choice of music to dance to. All staff members had a role to play as the training days were busy, we would make sure water and squash was available at all times keeping

everyone hydrated during the day. Ensuring all areas were kept clean, this would prevent drinks being spilt and avoiding slippery floors.

By the third day of training all staff had become to know each guest and their different needs and personalities. This was very comforting to all who attended, making them feel part of the team and excited to be included in the event. To be able to be a part of this wonderful event was a huge eye opener, every individual taking part was amazing and took huge pride in their dance. Some would dance in their wheelchairs being guided and helped by their caregivers and some danced in groups where they would each have a part to play. I was amazed at how quick the participants learnt each move and memorised their dances.

At the end of the training the participants had two full days performing their dances in front of a panel of judges. There were four judges, two being the mayor of Carmarthen and his wife, they were absolutely lovely and were thrilled to be a part of the event. All the judges cheered and clapped during each of the participants' dance giving them great encouragement. On completion of each dance routine the judges would give feedback and score the dance out of ten. At the end of both performance days the judges would pick a winner and they would then be automatically placed to perform in the finals which would be held in Cardiff at a later date.

The whole event provided great publicity for Laser Station and putting the venue on the map for future events interested in using the venue. The event was mentioned on all social media and followed by local press such as S4C and Wales Online. Both publishing the event on their online news feeds. I was very fortunate to be a part of this wonderful event and will forever remember all the great memories I have from the whole experience. I learnt that by having a disability does not mean you cannot achieve your goals or dreams, and be forever grateful to the participants for showing me anything is possible. Every single dancer who entered this competition had no fear and threw every inch of energy into their dance, having

huge confidence and enjoying every second. This was amazing to witness and to be a part of the event.

References

Leonard and Cheshire (2019) Available at : <https://www.leonardcheshire.org/about-us>
(accessed 03/11/2020)

Leonard and Cheshire (2019) Available at :
<https://www.leonardcheshire.org/about-us/our-news/press-releases/carmarthen-curtain-call-disabled-dancers> (accessed 03/11/2020)