

We are waves of the same sea: New mural brings message of hope to Sheffield

- Sheffield Hallam graduate and artist Will Rea has created a new mural on Ecclesall Road for Twinkl
- The artwork, which aims to inspire and instil hope, uses the words of a poem shared widely during the coronavirus pandemic

The Sheffield-based educational publisher, Twinkl, has unveiled a brand-new mural by local artist, Will Rea, along the front of the company's Ecclesall Road headquarters.

Will Rea, a local artist and Sheffield

Hallam graduate, was invited to design and paint the mural after Twinkl's team were impressed by his other works around the city, including his pieces on the Leadmill and in Orchard Square.

The mural was inspired by a poem written on the side of a package sent to the Sant'Anna School, a university in Pisa, Italy, during the coronavirus pandemic. The package contained protective equipment that was donated by former Chinese students of the University as an expression of gratitude and friendship to the academic community who had welcomed them so warmly.



Sent on the package in Italian, the poem was written by the ancient Roman philosopher Seneca and translates to: 'We are waves of the same sea, leaves of the same tree, flowers of the same garden.'

This uplifting message of solidarity now runs along the front of Twinkl's headquarters as a reminder to the Sheffield community that everybody is in this together.

Jon Seaton, CEO and Co-founder of Twinkl, said: "I first saw the poem used in the mural in a news article. It was such a powerful demonstration of solidarity and hope during the current coronavirus pandemic. The poem really resonated with me and a number of team members at Twinkl spoke to me about it too, so I wanted to incorporate it into the fabric of our headquarters to bring hope to both team members and the wider community during what has been a very difficult time."

The design, which took three weeks to complete, also reflects the company's ethos of nurturing a love of learning and giving every person a chance to shape their future.

Will Rea, the artist who created the mural, said: "It was a very humbling experience to be offered this opportunity by Twinkl. Not only because the location was so close to home, but also that the project allowed me to give something back to Sheffield and its ever-growing public artwork scene. Whilst painting the piece I was amazed by the positive feedback from the people of Sheffield from all walks of life. From office workers on their early morning commute, students on their way into town, to elderly couples out for an afternoon walk, lots of people stopped to compliment the work. I hope that this piece continues to bring some positivity to people's days for as long as it stands and that Sheffield enjoys it just as much as I enjoyed painting it."

Will now works as a freelance illustrator and muralist in Sheffield, after graduating from Sheffield Hallam University in 2017. His design for the mural incorporates nature and eco-imagery, as well as education inspired illustrations that reflect Twinkl's work to support educators and mission to help those who teach.

Twinkl creates online teaching and learning materials that are now used by educators, including teachers and parents, in over 200 countries and regions around the world. The company recognised that it needed to stay true to its mission and help educators more than ever during the coronavirus pandemic.

When schools closed or prepared to close in March, the company immediately offered its entire catalogue of resources, over 630,000, for free to teachers, parents and carers around



the world to support with home schooling as a result of coronavirus, Twinkl also created an ebook titled 'In It Together' to support children when they returned to school.

The Twinkl Originals book focuses on the experiences that children may have faced during lockdown and helps them understand that other peoples' circumstances might be different to theirs.

The company is committed to supporting teachers, parents and carers to navigate this unusual time and equipping them with high-quality resources and tools. Twinkl's Home Learning Hub, which was created at the beginning of school closures offers free daily lessons, activities and resources for all age groups.

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For more information please contact media@twinkl.co.uk or call 0114 212 3007